

CHINA  
PAST  
AND  
PRESENT

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E. H. PARKER

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# CHINA

## PAST AND PRESENT

BY

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NEW YORK  
E. P. DUTTON & CO.  
31 WEST TWENTY-THIRD STREET





TO  
THE MEMORY  
OF  
"OLD OW"



## INTRODUCTION

EVENTS have succeeded each other so rapidly in China, that a few months often suffice to convert "intelligent anticipations" into irrevocable history. This being so, the reader who honours these pages with perusal must charitably make allowances for views expressed under conditions which have, in some instances, now become obsolete.

In a few cases—as, for instance, the first chapter—the matter appears in print for the first time. In others, paragraphs, and even whole pages, have been entirely rewritten or recast. Acknowledgments are due to several senates, societies, faculties, and associations; also to the editors and publishers of many magazines, for their uniform kindness in allowing the present republication in book form. In particular I am requested to state that the "Letter from the Emperor of China to King George the Third" is reprinted by permission from the *Nineteenth Century*; the three articles "Diet and Medicine," "Life of a Chinese Mandarin," and "The Imperial Manchu Family," by permission from the *Cornhill Magazine*; the paper on "The Chinese Imbroglio," by permission from the *Asiatic Quarterly Review*; that on "The Multifarious Duties of a British Consul," by permission from *Temple Bar*; and that on "Chinese Sports," by permission from the *Badminton Magazine*. The map of China, based upon the late Dr. Bretschneider's first edition,

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E. H. PARKER.

18, GAMBIER TERRACE, LIVERPOOL,

*July, 1903.*



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# CHINA: PAST AND PRESENT

## BOOK I

### *HISTORICAL AND STATISTICAL*

#### CHAPTER I

##### A SKETCH OF CHINESE HISTORY

WITH us in Europe history means a great deal more than a mere tale of dynastic changes and race struggles. More especially in these islands, where free men have always to a large extent created or approved their own Governments, the annals of the people are just as interesting a study as the annals of our princes. How we began our first intelligible career as a dependency of Rome ; how we adopted a veneer of Roman civilization ; became a prey to Saxon and Danish invasions ; drove out the Roman garrisons ; softened our rude manners with Christianity ; fell under the feudal organization of Frenchified Scandinavians called Normans ; gradually welded Celtic and Teutonic elements into one race speaking a mixed language ; forced our Kings, our priests, and our nobles to share their power with the commons ; took full advantage of printing ; created a navy ; developed our trade ; built up an over-sea empire ; and rather late in the day extended the benefits of education to all classes. In a word, we have a history of material and social progress to deal with, as well as a record of race struggles and royal ambitions.

But with China it is different. Setting aside for the moment the important fermentations which have taken place within the past thirty years, and more especially the last

two years, we must first of all recognize the preliminary fact that material civilization is there now very much in the stage it was 2000 years ago. The vast majority of the population is made up of peasantry, mostly living in mud, untrimmed stone, rough timber, or reed houses, according to climate, locality, and available material for building ; few of even the best houses (except in towns) are floored ; almost none, even in cities, have a ceiling ; and if they have, it is of unsubstantially hung or pasted sheets of paper. Any accumulation of wealth beyond land, cattle, and stores of farm produce, consists in feast-day clothes, women's ornaments, and buried silver. There are no carriages, horses, or fine harness ; no pictures worth more than a few shillings ; no well-laid breakfast or dinner tables ; no newspapers, postmen, railways, tramways, omnibuses, or even decent roads and side-paths to walk on ; no bookcases, bedsteads, easy-chairs, pianos, carpets, table-cloths, writing-desks, gas, lamps, matches, or even respectable candles ; no house-games, cigars, wine, beer, clean linen, washstands ; or, in short, any articles of luxury. There is little difference between the unutterable meanness of Chinese poverty and that of Russian peasant poverty, as described by Princess Kropotkin. One-storeyed, often one-roomed houses, standing on, not built into, the mother earth ; a few wooden or cane chairs, couches, and tables ; one or two iron or copper pans and kettles ; a rude hatchet, a knife or two, and scoops or ladles ; coarse rice-bowls and teacups, wooden chopsticks ; a spinning-wheel ; coarse cotton clothes, patched and darned ; water-buckets ; a cow or an ox for ploughing ; dirty, ragged bed-quilts ; a dog, pigs, and chickens ; rats all over the house, and vermin too.—The one bright spot in this dead level of material backwardness is the village school, where a very fair practical education is given, or a basis for it is suggested, by the study of books hundreds and even thousands of years old, which are nearly as intelligible in all dialects now as they were when first composed. Of course, it is understood that large towns, and especially those in reach of foreign trade, do not in all respects fall within the above indictment ; and it must be added that the money-squeezing officials, the “ eaters ” of the people, enjoy a certain degree of sensuous luxury in valuable clothes, rich food, and expensive

harems. But they form a small minority, like the Russian minority which feeds on the helpless ignorant millions.

I just digress for an instant from my proposed subject in order to point out that the outline history of China is not exactly a history of material progress and popular development; and it may therefore be told in a much simpler and shorter way than the labyrinthian history of Europe. There is no legal, medical, social, political, theological, or other obtrusive science to complicate plain government matters. The people, subject after great wars to certain periodical changes in status between freemen and slaves or prisoners of battle, have always been free and comparatively independent farmers on their own land, or merchants in their own guilds, as they are now. They have governed themselves in municipal and village communities; with a few rare and well-known exceptions, no central government has ever done anything for them except tax them in grain, salt, money, merchandise in transit, labour, and military service. No sanitation, registry, passport, marriage, funeral, educational, or other limits or laws. No public works, except to keep off inundations; no maintenance of roads, proclamation of laws, popular voting, parliamentary representatives, licences, game-laws, fishing-laws, testamentary laws, or interference with family arrangements. Local custom has governed the people, and the people have formed custom for themselves. History, then, is simply this: What group of adventurers shall fatten and batten on the people who thus till the earth; and who shall do this under the time-honoured sanction of Heaven's decree? The written history of China is no philosophical science. It is merely a bare but priceless and accurate record of events jumbled together without sense of proportion day by day for 2000 years. Thus, Monday, January 1st, 601: "The Turks raided Peking." Tuesday, "Dame Jones made concubine of the second class." Wednesday, "Tribute from Persia and Borneo." Thursday, "The Dowager vomited blood." Friday, "General Smith defeated by the Canton insurgents; all his relations executed." Besides this bare record, there are special chapters on great men, the calendar, barbarous States, music, and ceremonies. It is for us Europeans to create a science out of individual facts, just as botanists have

created a science by simply grouping in literary form the flowers growing one by one under our very noses.

All the old civilizations of antiquity, besides fighting for possession amongst themselves, have had to defend their existence, both in Asia and in Europe, against the inroads of the horse-riding or Tartar hordes. (The word Tartar is a mediæval Chinese word, used vaguely, as with us, for "nomad peoples.") When first the Chinese are heard of (and they themselves are the sole authority, for no one else records anything about them), they occupied the valley of the Yellow River and its tributaries as tillers of the soil, paying to their rulers a portion of the produce as taxes in grain, silk, and hempen cloth. Despite speculations touching their possible Babylonian or Akkadian origin, there exists no evidence whatever to show how they got there ; but there they certainly were 2700 years before Christ ; and, from that date until the creation of a truly historical empire about 200 years before Christ, they were from time to time engaged in pushing the indigenous tribes towards the sea, and in defending themselves against the inroads of Turks to the north and Tibetans to the west. (I use these two designations for brevity's sake, but the word "Turk" is never heard previous to A.D. 550, nor the word "Tibet" until several centuries subsequent even to that date.) This long period of 2500 years is by no means destitute of events, nor is there any statement of fact which taxes our credulity. We gain a very tolerable notion of travel and geography, and a fairly clear, if inspired, smack of humdrum Chinese life. The only thing is that dates are often inconsistent, self-contradictory, or vague ; the picture lacks definiteness, and there are more sermonizings and heart-searchings than specific lively events and results ; more talk than action. The chief mouth of the then almost unknown river Yangtsze ran across from near the treaty port of Wuhu to Hangchow ; much of modern Kiang Su province was awash with the ocean ; the Yellow River entered the sea farther north than at present, near Tientsin ; successive dynasties and emperors shifted their capitals to various points in its valley ; and it is quite clear that the governing classes possessed astronomical knowledge of no mean order. Certainly 1000, and probably 4000 years ago they had, by means of a

seventy-six-year cycle, brought the tropical, lunar, and diurnal year into harmony; and their method of computation enables us, if not to verify even their semi-historical records, at least to say that there is no reasonable ground to suspect the truth of their standard chronicles; and even for a considerable period beyond 4000 years ago it is only early Chinese ignorance of the winter solstice, or neglect to make observations at the recurrence of that event, that causes their remotest chronology to be vague and unsatisfactory to modern astronomers.

The semi-historical period, as distinguished from the semi-mythical period above described, begins about 1100 B.C., and now it is that we find a new dynasty has to cope with northern Tartars as well as western Tibetan invaders, who were the chief bane of earlier dynasties; in fact, this dynasty, which was practically invited in by the people, owing to the misrule of the ejected Chinese monarch, is described as being of "western stranger" origin—a term which sounds much more suggestive than it really is, for no great distance is meant. At this moment all China south of the Yangtsze, all the Upper Yangtsze valley and the Shan Tung promontory, were still in the hands of barbarian tribes. Nothing was yet known of Mongolia, Manchuria, Corea, Japan, Tonquin, Tibet, or Kokonor. The condition of China was much like that of the Roman Empire after the conquest of Italy, but previous to the Punic wars. In Europe there was some vague notion of Britain, Germany, Spain, France, the barbarians of the Danube, and so on, all of which peoples, if strange to the Romans and Italians, were at any rate of Aryan race like themselves. Rome had usurped the Greek place in civilization, and was confronted with Semitic and Hamitic rivals to the south, in the shape of Carthage and Egypt. In China it is not to be doubted that the unconquered tribes to the south were, as they still are, of tone-using, monosyllabic race, akin to the Chinese. The more westerly and new dynasty usurped the old one's place in civilization, and was confronted with Turanian rivals to the north. Rome's expansion was northwards amongst her own kind: her truly foreign foes lay southward across the seas. China's expansion was southwards amongst her own kind: her truly foreign foes lay northward



across the deserts. The policy of the new dynasty was to parcel out the "middle kingdom" (which is still the current name for China) into fiefs or principalities, the Emperor reserving a moderate province to his own direct rule, and exercising over his feudal relatives a sort of loose supervision akin to that which the Popes of the Middle Ages practised over European States. Copies of all the most important vassal-state archives and chronicles were preserved at the imperial capital, which also issued ceremonial, astrological, and other functional directions and rules. There is evidence to show that many dialects were spoken then, as now, and that the methods of writing, whilst maintaining a general resemblance, differed in slight detail in the various States. Documents were scratched with a style upon thin tablets of wood or bamboo, almost as we may see at this day the Hindu bankers scratching their accounts upon dried palmyra leaves. Hence books were cumbrous and expensive, and recorded knowledge was necessarily confined (as with ourselves during the Middle Ages) to a very limited official and literary class. Parts of Manchuria were now conquered, but political dealings with that region were subsequently confined to the principality situated about modern Peking, and have no important bearing on general or imperial history.

There are fairly trustworthy accounts or traditions that about B.C. 977 a Chinese Emperor made a great military tour of inspection over Mongolia and the highroads to the West; there is specific mention of *kumiss*, or mares' milk, and of a mountain known to be near modern Urga and the Russian town of Kiachta. In the whole of Chinese history and tradition there does not seem to be the faintest hint of any knowledge of the Great West anterior to this. Though we have thousands of clay inscriptions in London, some of them 6000 years old, not even the mere mention of writing on clay ever once occurs in Chinese tradition, so that we must wait for specific evidence before we couple Chinese culture with Akkadian. This travelling Emperor seems to have lost the old influence over the Tibetan tribes on his frontier, and about B.C. 874 the westernmost principality of Ts'in first secured that influence, and then separated from the Chinese federal system altogether. A few years later we find the

Emperor approving one of the vassal successions in Shan Tung ; but subsequent to this the central authority begins to wane, and this waning of the central power is coincident with the date which the first and greatest Chinese historian (whose book, written 2000 years ago, is perfectly good and plain reading now) assigns to the commencement of true and exact history ; that is, B.C. 827.

Now, although we arrive at last at the portals of true history, the chief difference between it and the more doubtful history is that the dates are precise, and exhortations to act give frequent place to intelligible action. The more certain facts in no way either differ in quality from or discredit the older uncertain ones. It is evident that, if all English records previous to 1800 were absolutely annihilated, our defective memories and traditions would soon force us to confess that the true history of England began in 1801. So with Chinese history. It is sober enough. There is no reason why we should not accept as vaguely true what we are vaguely told ; no reason for inventing what we are not told ; and no reason (judging by the provable fidelity of the true later history) to suppose that the less exact, and therefore less provable, history ever was unfaithful. Chinese history begins 2700 B.C., but it is insipid and intangible until B.C. 800, which is about the date when genuine western history began too ; that is to say, until the quite recent discoveries in Asia Minor, Crete, Egypt, Babylonia, and Persia yielded to our archæologists whole libraries of forgotten records, some dating long anterior to the supposed creation of the world. If, instead of cumbersome but perishable wood, the Chinese had used still more cumbersome but unperishable baked mud, we might hope to achieve in due course the same triumphant results for China. As matters stand, it is no exaggeration to say that we have scarcely a single Chinese document of importance actually existing now as it existed 2000 years ago ; all the ancient writings, with trivial exceptions, are copies from memory, or transcriptions in a modified form of writing, from defective manuscripts.

From 800 to 200 B.C. the Chinese imperial power declined, very much as the Roman power and the mediæval Germano-Roman power successively declined in Europe. The feudal

princes, ruling over territories roughly corresponding to the now existing northern provinces, contested, both with each other and with the Emperor, for supremacy; very much as France, Spain, England, Germany, and Italy intrigued with each other, and with the Pope, for temporal advantages, whilst at the same time accepting the Pope's spiritual supremacy when it suited them. Dovetailed in, between what the Chinese called the half-dozen Great Powers, were minor states corresponding to our Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, and Denmark. Looming away to the west was the untamed state of Ts'in, like Russia in Peter the Great's time, developing her resources in distant secrecy, and nourishing vast ambitions. Along the line of the Yangtsze River were powers only half Chinese, which may be compared with our half European Turkey, Saracen Spain, and Egypt or Syria. Sometimes one great Power became *doyen*, or "holder of the cow's ear;" sometimes the other; offensive and defensive alliances were formed, minor Powers rose and fell, the Emperor was hustled, barbarian aid (chiefly Tibetan) was invoked, and finally, between 400 and 200 B.C., the vassal States openly assumed independent regal status, just as the Teutonic and other countries, nominally under the sovereignty of the Roman Augustus or Supreme Emperor, arrogated to themselves, first the title of Cæsar or Associate Emperor, and then that of Augustus. It was in the middle of this transition period, say 500 B.C., that Confucius occupied a commanding position as statesman in the vassal kingdom of Lu (part of Shan Tung). Lu was a highly respectable power, but never a great one, and Confucius' aim was to suppress violent ambitions and mean passions, to restore the Emperor's supreme authority, and to do away with "Jingoism," both in political and in provincial life. The end of all this was that Ts'in, which in B.C. 374 had rejoined the federal system after a separate and semi-barbarian existence of 500 years, gradually intrigued or fought the other States one by one out of their independence, until at last, in B.C. 221, the triumphant King of that country assumed the new title of Hwang-ti, or Emperor, which continues in use to this day.

During all this time the various vassal States had naturally increased their knowledge of South China, Corea, and other



outlying parts ; but although Chinese colonies pushed along the lines of the great rivers, it seems quite certain that no part outside the area of the Yellow River and its tributaries was yet any more truly Chinese than Britain, Gaul, Batavia, Spain, Pannonia, Africa, and other parts colonized or occupied by Roman power were truly Italian. The nationality idea was in neither case yet born. It is important to bear this in mind, and to remember that in most of the southern and western provinces there are still mountain communities of indigenous tribes, akin to the Chinese in the same remote and undefined way that the Norwegians, Roumanians, Portuguese, and Poles are akin to older Aryan communities, such as the Greeks. There were from time to time brushes with the various Tartar horsemen in the north, and several great walls were built a century or more before the so-called First Emperor conquered the whole of China, and constructed or increased the long line of now ruined fortifications still extending from the Shan-hai Kwan (during 1900-1 in our occupation) to near Lake Kokonor.

It was in B.C. 221 that occurred one of those great epoch-making events upon which hinges the main history of the world. Since her re-admission into Chinese diplomacy in B.C. 374, the western State of Ts'in had made such excellent use of her opportunities in agriculture, diplomacy, and war, that the other States, including the Imperial State, fell one after the other into her toils, and were crushed out of political existence, as already stated. The King of Ts'in (who, like the modeller of our own new system, William the Conqueror, was a bastard), at last declared himself Supreme Ruler of the world (as then known); divided what we now call China proper into thirty-six provinces; and set about making a series of military promenades in person, which, however, never extended southward of the lakes Poyang and Tungting. The Tartars were driven beyond the Yellow River; an attempt was made to simplify, to assimilate, or standardize the various forms of writing; the present writing-brush was invented or improved; the axles of all carts were made of the same breadth, so as to facilitate trade movements; an adjusted calendar was circulated; laws, weights, and measures were verified; and metal arms were called in to be recast

into bells and images. Whilst touring towards the Shan-hai Kwan and modern Chefoo, the Emperor heard vague rumours of certain islands beyond the sea, which the vassal kingdom around modern Peking had already either discovered or heard of a century before this. These islands were Japan; but as yet nothing definite was known of Japan, Corea, Manchuria, Mongolia, Tibet, Indo-China, or even Canton, Foochow, and Yün Nan. However, the thirty-six provinces nominally included Liao-si, Liao-tung (*i.e.* west and east of the Liao River), South China, and the valley of the Upper Yangtsze, as far as it is navigable. As the learned men of the empire disapproved and criticized these innovations, a general battue and holocaust of bookworms and books was organized in B.C. 213—a much easier matter than might at first sight be supposed, if we reflect that the Emperor himself read a fixed allowance of 120 pounds weight of despatches a day; that is, each book of importance was so cumbrous and expensive that its whereabouts was as notorious as our early editions of Shakespeare, and its bulk almost as hard to conceal as would be the Assyrian man-bulls in the European museums.

This revolutionary Emperor died in B.C. 210, whilst on tour, and at a spot quite close to where 2100 years later a murder of German missionaries led up to the present situation in China. His son was a poor eunuch-ridden creature, incompetent to carry on the grandiose ideas of the father, in consequence of which revolts broke out through the whole “black-head” region (as the restricted area of true China was then called), and several rival adventurers struggled for power. This is one of the most charming and vivid stories in the history of the world, and yields not one whit in interest when compared with the accounts of the two Cæsars’ struggles with Pompey and Mark Antony. Any one who can understand French may read every line of it in a translation of China’s first great history, recently published by Professor Chavannes, of Paris.

At last the adventurer, known from his appanage as the Prince of Han, succeeded in destroying all his rivals, and in establishing himself as Emperor at modern Si-an Fu (the place to which the flying Empress-Dowager betook herself

in the year 1900). There were two or three successive editions of the Han dynasty, which from first to last endured from B.C. 206 to A.D. 263. There was a short break at the time of Our Lord's birth, but by A.D. 25 the Eastern Han had got rid of revolutionary pretenders, and had planted its new capital securely at modern Ho-nan Fu. Between A.D. 220 and 263 the empire was divided into three, owing to Imperial decay and rival ambitions. The northern, or Old China part, was entirely in the hands of a rival house, founded by the celebrated General Ts'ao Ts'ao, whose achievements are as much a matter of notoriety in China as the contemporary struggles between Septimius Severus and his rival Clodius Albinus for the possession of Rome in Europe. The third edition of the Han house ruled in what we now call Sz Ch'wan, which was then a congeries of Tibetan and other half-savage tribes, mixed with Chinese colonists along the navigable rivers. South China, but thinly populated by tribes of the Annamese, Siamese, and Lolo type, was loosely held up by a third successful family, which thus had a monopoly of the Roman, Persian, and Indian shipping trade. Rome, or Roman Syria, was then called Ta-ts'in.

The total results of these 460 years of Han rule may be shortly summarized as follows. The power of the Hiung-nu Tartars or Huns had been so broken that, before Jesus Christ was born, one-half of their hordes had been driven far away towards the Aral Sea and the Volga ; the other half became pensioners and allies of the Chinese. But even these gradually fell a prey to, or wore themselves out in struggling against, the rising power of the Tungusic Tartars ; so that when, in the third century A.D., China split up into three empires, the nomads were unable to take advantage of the general anarchy further than to seize portions of undefended territory, and temporarily to set up as aspirants for power, after the fashion of the Ostrogoth, Visigoth, and Vandal chiefs, who used to take similar advantage of Roman dissensions.

This protracted 400 years' struggle for existence with the Hiung-nu (as the much later Turkish tribes were then called) had some very important side results. First of all the Tartars, when at the height of their power in B.C. 200, had driven westwards a once powerful race of nomads

called the Yüeh-tchī or Yet-ti. After a period of hustling with hostile neighbours, these Yet-ti migrators at last settled down in the Affghanistan and Bactrian region, where they came into contact with the remains of the Greek civilization introduced by Alexander, and ended by founding a powerful Indo-Scythian empire, embracing the modern Punjāb. The Chinese, in their endeavours to secure the assistance of these Yet-ti fugitives against their common enemies the Tartars, had to coax and fight their way through Turkestan. All this led first to a knowledge of the Tarim valley, the Pamirs, Khotan, and Kashgar; then to an acquaintanceship with modern Kokand, Samarcand, the Oxus, and Jaxartes; to vague rumours of India and a possible route thither through the Upper Yangtsze region; to the introduction, from India by way of the Yet-ti empire and Turkestan, of Buddhism; to certain notions touching Parthia and the overland silk trade with Rome; and to ill-defined traditions of the Roman Empire itself. The necessity of turning the eastern flank of the Tartars led, in the same way, to a closer knowledge of Liao-tung affairs; to the temporary conquest of North Corea; to relations with Japan; and so on.

The premature collapse of the mighty fabric conceived as described by the Ts'in Emperor in B.C. 221, caused the vassal kings in the Canton Yün Nan region to be isolated for many years, and the new Han dynasty was obliged to carry its arms up the southern rivers in order to compel recognition of the new dynasty by disloyal satraps. This led first to the conquest of Canton and Foochow; to a knowledge of Indo-China; to an application of the strategic and commercial uses of the Si-kiang, or "Western River;"—and then to the further consideration of the southern road to India question. When it is remembered that even now the south-western provinces are more than half populated by non-Chinese races; and that even in all the south-eastern provinces there are tribes—some of them quite independent—more or less like the Chinese in appearance, language, and dress, but bearing distinctive national names; it becomes easy for us to realize the first great illustrative fact in Chinese history—that the cultured representatives of the great yellow monosyllabic races, starting so far as we can reach back from the Yellow



River valley, have gradually advanced, fan-like, towards the sea, the Himalayas, and the desert ; colonizing the natural roads and rivers, and driving before them or assimilating the various Tungusic, Turkish, Tibetan, Siamese, and Annamese rivals. In the two cases of Tibet and Indo-China, there have been the rival Hindu influences to contend with ; but in all other cases the enemies of China have either been absorbed beyond recognition, have adopted some modified form of Chinese civilization, have sullenly retired to the mountains as ignorant barbarians, or have remained independent under nominal Chinese suzerainty. Hence China has good excuses for imagining a world in herself.

China was reunited in A.D. 265 in the hands of the Tsin dynasty, founded, like most Chinese dynasties, by a successful general taking advantage of a decrepit and corrupt court. From the very beginning this new ruling house (which must not be confused with the Ts'in dynasty of B.C. 221) had to contend with a pack of Tartar and Tibetan adventurers, more or less instructed in Chinese ways, and usually prompted by renegade Chinese interpreters and secretaries. With the space at our disposal it is impossible to say more than that China, with her capital still at Loh-yang (Ho-nan Fu), was like the more easterly Roman Empire under Diocletian, Constantius, and Constantine. The centre had shifted. Buddhism had now obtained a firm foothold in China, as Christianity had in Europe. Just as the Gauls, Germans, Goths, and Vandals pressed upon Rome and Constantinople, so the Coreans, Tunguses, Hiung-nu, and Tibetans pressed upon the two capitals of China. In yet a second way does history repeat itself. In A.D. 386 the Tungusic Tartars of the Toba house succeeded, not only in driving away all Tartar and Tibetan rivals, but also in dividing the Chinese Empire with the Tsin dynasty, which had then already for seventy years been driven by the contending Tartars to the modern Nanking. The Tsin dynasty soon afterwards collapsed altogether, and for 200 years five short Chinese houses ruled one after the other in the south, whilst the Toba Tartars had undisputed possession of North China. This period of 200 years is what the historians call the "North and South Dynasties Period."

I just now gave a general sketch of the main results of the 400 years' policy abroad on both sides of the year 1 of our Lord. The general development in the succeeding 400 years—that is, up to A.D. 600—may be described as follows. The southern dynasties have developed a considerable sea trade with India, Ceylon, Indo-China, and the islands of the southern seas. The Toba Tartars ruling in North China have reopened a connection with the Far West as far as Persia, but nothing new is learnt about Mesopotamia or the Roman Empire. These same Tobas, who were apparently akin to what we now call Mongols, have only driven their rivals, the Hiung-nu, away to the West in order to find another nomad power—that of the Geougen—developing in the desert regions. Gibbon, following the lead of the Jesuit missionaries of the eighteenth century, has identified this new power with the Avars; but this view cannot possibly be sustained. The general situation in North Asia may be thus stated in A.D. 580, the date of China's once more reuniting under a native dynasty called the Sui. Japan, Corea, and Manchuria had all become better known, and had all had diplomatic relations with both northern and southern dynasties; but none of them had exercised any important political influence beyond their own spheres of unlettered development. The old Hiung-nu, who had harassed China so persistently from B.C. 200 to A.D. 200, had now quite disappeared as a ruling power bearing that name, and after forming principalities in Sogd and other Aral-Caspian regions, had crossed the Volga and burst upon Europe in the shape of Attila and his Huns. The ancient Tungusic Sienpi, formerly vassals of the Hiung-nu, had either absorbed or had made slaves of those of their ancient masters who had not betaken themselves West; and they had besides, under the dynastic name of Toba, for two centuries also ruled the northern half of China as Chinese Emperors. But the necessity of thus dividing their attention had given opportunity to a new great nomad power to grow in the north. This Geougen power, which appears to have been Turko-Finnish, but as to whose exact ethnological elements we are still in the dark, had to its west, in the Lake Balkash region, a power called Yüeh-pan, and this Yüeh-pan is distinctly stated to be

one of the Hiung-nu principalities founded during the western flight several centuries before. The Tobas endeavoured, about A.D. 450, to arrange with these Yüeh-pan a common attack upon the Geougen, and after this they—the Yüeh-pan—utterly disappear from Chinese history. Meanwhile a petty Hiung-nu tribe of iron-workers, vassal to the Geougen, and bearing in A.D. 550 the name “Turk,” had slowly grown into importance in the old region vacated B.C. 200 by the Yet-ti. When at last the Toba dynasty split up into two rival factions, one faction allied itself with the Turks against the other faction, allies of the Geougen. To cut this complicated tangle short, China emerged from the general fray united under one native emperor of the Sui dynasty: Tartar dynasties of all kinds were driven from China, and the whole of Siberia, Mongolia, and Manchuria was once more reunited under the sway of energetic Turkish khans.

I am afraid it will be rather difficult for readers to follow me through this Geougen tangle, which, however, is more clearly explained in an article which appeared in the *Asiatic Quarterly Review* on the 1st of April, 1902. But I particularly wish to point out the important results. Both Turks and Avars appeared at Constantinople in or about 568, and we know from European history what part the Huns and Avars took in the European race struggles during the growth of the Frankish power. The opinion I have formed is that these Asiatic invasions of Europe accord exactly with disappearances from China. The Hiung-nu were the Huns, the Yüeh-pan branch of the Hiung-nu were the Avars. The Geougen were destroyed, never fled West, and could not possibly be the Avars.

Just at the time when united China was thus left face to face with united Turkey (if we may use this term), news came, apparently through Persia and Turkey, of a great power in the Far West called Fuh-lin, stated to be identical with the Ta-ts'in, first vaguely heard of during the first century of the Christian era, trading envoys from which place came to China by sea in the second and third centuries. This Fuh-lin I take to be the growing power of the Franks, who had already come into contact with the Avars in Bavaria. To this day Ferreng, Afrang, Folang, or Filing is the almost universal word in Eastern languages for Europeans of all

kinds, and it is from this date, say A.D. 600, that I trace the commencement of true intercourse and free interchange of thought between the Eastern and the Western group of civilizations. Our word "China" is not a whit more clear in its origin than is the Chinese word "Ferreng."

But now Mahomet arose in Arabia ; the isolated power of Tibet had grown amazingly under the impulse of Hindu culture ; a powerful Shan or Siamese empire had developed in Yün Nan ; Japan had adopted Buddhism, and had also acquired an extensive knowledge of Chinese civilization ; Nestorian Christians had found their way overland to China ; the three petty kingdoms of Corea had become metamorphosed into cultured States ; and the great T'ang dynasty of China had overthrown and developed the grandiose ideas of the Sui, whose magnificent rule suddenly collapsed in the same way, and for the same reasons, as when the Han empire took over the succession of Ts'in.

At last we are brought face to face with people we can recognize, and facts we can prove, by evidence available to this day. In the Tibetan city of Lhasa the original bilingual Sanskrit-Chinese inscriptions dated 822 still remain there, carved upon stone, to confirm the statements of Chinese history ; the celebrated Syriac-Chinese Nestorian stone still stands in Si-an Fu, to explain who the Franks were, and what Christianity was ; the stone inscriptions of Ta-li Fu in Yün Nan remain to corroborate the rise and fall of the first Siamese empire ; within the past fifteen years numerous Turkish-Chinese bilingual slabs have been found by the Russians in various parts of Mongolia, proving that the Hiung-nu of B.C. 200 to A.D. 200 were the Turks of A.D. 500 to 700 ; and that during the migrations West an alphabet of Aramæan or Syrian origin had been introduced, by way of Sogd, into Mongolia.

The whole face of China was now changed ; colonists and fugitives from the north had populated all the more accessible regions south of the Yangtsze ; Arab civilization, commerce, and culture had, under the impulse of Mahomet's new doctrine, displaced Hindu influence all along the sea-line from Arabia to Hangchow ; the troops of the Khaliphs had conquered nearly all the Aryan land covered by



Alexander a thousand years before ; had come face to face with the Turks in Bactriana ; and had even taken part in the desperate struggles between the Siamese and Tibetan empires on the Burmese frontier ; Japan advanced claims to recognition as an equal State, but kept aloof from Chinese politics ; Corea was twice overrun by Chinese armies, in order to cut her off from Turkish influence ; the struggle for existence with the predatory Turks was almost as prolonged and as desperate as the contest of the Han dynasty had been with the Hiung-nu ; the Chinese had all they could do to protect their west and south-west frontiers from the ambitious attacks of the Tibetans and Siamese ; and the Tungusic peoples between the Turks and Corea, whilst trimming between rival powers as it suited them best for the moment, had opportunity once more to develop a very serious power.

After a brilliant rule of 300 years the T'ang dynasty fell into decrepitude, partly in consequence of the exhaustion brought about by its incessant struggle with the Tartars, Tibetans, and Siamese ; partly from eunuch influences, and internal corruption. The Turkish power had, in the seventh century, been divided and crushed just as the Han dynasty had split up and driven west the Hiung-nu power ; but the other results had been the same. China was so impoverished in blood and treasure that the Tungusic powers had once more time to grow, and the remains of the Turks intrigued for rule in North China exactly as the remains of the Hiung-nu had done. China fell to pieces, and for about half a century there ruled a succession of five short dynasties, three of them rather Turkish than Chinese ; but they only ruled over Central, or what may be called "Old China," and even this only at the cost of paying tribute to the Cathayans of modern Peking. The Cathayans, it must be explained, were simply a reshuffle of the ancient Sienpi, just as the Turks were a reshuffle of the ancient Hiung-nu. Meanwhile the south and west of China were once more divided into a number of semi-independent Imperial States ruling at or near what we now call Canton, Foochow, Hangchow, Nanking, Hankow, and Ch'eng-tu. A strong mixed power, usually described as Tangut, and consisting chiefly of Tibetan elements under

migrated Toba rulers, gradually gained consistence in the region of Ordos and Kokonor; Corea, Annam, Yün Nan, and Tibet took advantage of the anarchy to recover their practical independence; and there followed a series of devastating wars.

Towards the close of the tenth century the situation stood thus. A successful General had succeeded in reuniting the whole of Old China and South China under a new native dynasty called Sung. The Cathayans, assisted by Chinese renegades, and fed by enormous relays of artisans, cultivators, and other prisoners of war, founded a very strong empire of what may be called the Parthian or Boer type, *i.e.* half horse-back and half settled. For 200 years this Cathayan empire monopolized the whole of the supreme power in Mongolia, receiving tribute from the remains of the Turks to the west and the rising Manchu tribes to the east. Although one or two complimentary missions came from the Khaliphs, from Persia, Khotan, and other western places, it may be said roughly that when the bulk of the Turks fled west, to hide their new movements in the new forms of Ghaznivides, Seldjuks, and Osmanli, they drew after them the holes into which they crept. For many centuries all land knowledge of the Far West is blotted out from Chinese minds. The Tangut Kingdom effectually blocked the way between China and Turkestan, and the chief occupation of that capable state was in playing off South China against the Cathayans, paying normal tribute to both. Tibet, Yün Nan, Indo-China, and Japan were left entirely alone, to work out their own developments in comparative oblivion. The south-sea trade developed rapidly, and there grew up important Arab and Persian trading colonies at various ports between Canton and the Yangtze; but even at this comparatively late date the Governments of Central China seem to have known but little of the economical development which was taking place along the coasts. Trade was as yet a purely popular and unofficial institution.

The tyranny of the Cathayans over their eastern vassals, the true Tunguses, or Manchu States, then collectively known as the Nüchên, led to a revolt in those little-known regions. The tribes in question, hardened by the discipline of a

hunting life, had by degrees evolved a military strategy of no mean order. Their masters, the Cathayans, had become correspondingly corrupt and softened by two centuries of close contact with Chinese luxury. The upshot of all this was that the southern Chinese intrigued with the Nüchêns on the basis of regaining for China the Peking plain, which had been so long a part of Cathay. As seems to have been the invariable case in the history of the world when a weak power asks the aid of a strong one, the Nüchêns not only drove out of North China the common Cathayan enemy, but soon found pretexts for keeping the Peking plain for themselves, and encroaching farther upon China proper. Simultaneously with the substitution of the Nüchêns for the Cathayans in North China, the Sung or pure Chinese dynasty found it necessary to move their capital, which was in 1136 transferred to Hangchow. The powerful state of Tangut, on being summoned to do so, promptly transferred to the Nüchêns the limited amount of homage it had once paid to the Cathayans, and continued to keep the two balls in the air, so to speak, by playing off North China against South China.

The chief picture to focus before the eye with reference to this period—900 to 1200 A.D.—is that Tartars of a Tungusic kind, first of the Mongol type, and next of the Manchu type, had absolute and exclusive rule of the Peking plain and the parts west of it as far as the Ordos bend. To the north lay the rest of their vast Mongol-Manchu empire, with which South or literary China had no concern. Throughout the whole of this period the mixed Tibeto-Chinese populations, under the rule of a migrated Tungusic family, maintained a really powerful empire, by Europeans styled Tangut, on account of the preference given to Tangut or Tibetan speech. Owing to this large infusion of Tartar blood, the northern dialects of China, and notably that of Peking, which is the best known to Europeans, became corrupted in exactly the same way that Latin became corrupted in Gaul. Hence the Pekingese, or other "mandarin" dialects may be styled the French of China, whilst the true Latin or ancient classical pronunciation must be looked for in the south. Thus it comes that, Corea and Annam having practically been shut

out for many centuries, we find that the numerous Chinese words imported into these regions two thousand years ago, confirm, better than does any other pure Chinese dialect, the key to ancient sounds still furnished by colloquial Cantonese. During this period of divided empire, the southern Chinese got into the habit of humorously describing the northerners as *ta-ta*, or *ta-tsz*, being our vague word "Tartar." By way of return compliment, the northerners ridiculed the southern men as *man-tsz*, or "fuzzy-wuzzies." During this same 300-year period nothing whatever is said of either Christianity or Islamism; the remains of the Turks seem to have quietly developed their new religion in political relation with the Khaliphate, and to have gone their way totally unheeded by either North or South China.

Now occurred one of those events upon which hinge the higher history of the world. The chief of an obscure Turko-Tungusic tribe, often called *Ta-ta*, and apparently identical with a branch of the Cathayan type already for centuries known as *Mung-wa*, became incensed at the tyrannical insolence of the *Nüchên* tax-gatherer, spit in his face, and told him (as we should say) to "go to the devil" with his imperial master. This chief was the future Genghis Khan, and this first insubordinate act led by degrees to the overthrowing of the *Nüchên* dynasty. Like all Tartar leaders who have once succeeded in rousing enthusiasm, the chief of the *Mung-wa* or *Mung-ku* tribe soon succeeded in attracting to his banner the innumerable hordes of Turkish and mixed race scattered about with their horses, cattle, tents, and waggons over the vast expanse of North Asia. One of the first things was to sweep away the intervening Tangut empire which stood in his way. He seems to have had no particular idea of western conquest until the Mussulman Sultan of Otrar in Turkestan behaved in an outrageous way to some Mongol ambassadors. This led to the conquest of Turkestan, Bucharía, all the countries of the old Ephthalite or *Yet-ti* empire between the Indus and the Euphrates destroyed by the Turks about 550, and ultimately to the incorporation of the Kirghis, Kipchaks, Armenians, and Russians. At one time even Western Europe trembled with apprehension, and it is from the accounts left behind by



Rubruquis and other emissaries, sent by the Pope and the King of France to the Mongol khans in Russia and Mongolia, that we derive much of our information about those times. This information is amply confirmed by the Chinese histories. The native historians, it is true, understood little or nothing of the outlandish persons and places they described on the authority of return warriors in Hungary, Russia, and Persia ; but fortunately they "nailed their names at least to the counter," and scanty though the context is, it is sufficient for us to know by these names that there is no serious distortion of the fact as we are sure of it from Western sources. But even with all this practical experience of the West, and the occasional reappearance of the word Fuh-lang, or "Frank," the Mongols carried back to China no definite notion of what kind of people the Franks really were, and how they stood in relation to the old Roman Empire of Ta-ts'in. They may be partly excused by the circumstance that the Byzantine Roman Empire had then practically ceased to exist, and that the miserable remains of it to be found at Constantinople were barely on a footing of equality with the Popes of Rome, and with the Teutonic Roman Empire, or the Western Powers of Spain, France, England, and Germany.

On the first menacing appearance of the great Mongol Power, the Nüchên Emperor had appealed in vain to Tangut to forget old grudges and unite against an invader who would otherwise destroy both in turn. The Southern Chinese empire had the same bitter experience. After assisting the Mongols to drive out the Nüchêns, the *Man-tsz* (Marco Polo's *Manzi*) empire was devoured piecemeal by Genghis Khan's successors, and in 1280 Kublai Khan, grandson of Genghis, having completed the conquest of China, reigned over the greatest empire ever seen in the Far East.

Marco Polo's faithful narrative best enables those who cannot yet study Chinese history to judge what this empire was. Members of Kublai's family ruled over Russia, the Caucasus, Persia, all the Pamir countries, all the useful parts of Siberia, and Manchuria. Mongol viceroys dictated conditions to Corea, Tibet, Burma, and Annam. Mongol influence extended fitfully to Sulu, Java, Sumatra, the Bay of Bengal, and Ceylon. Japan alone succeeded in absolutely repelling

any attempt at invasion. But the usual course of events followed: Saul among the prophets was not more out of place than are nomad Tartars on a civilized throne. Success begat insolence and carelessness, and Kublai's successors soon dissipated their great inheritance. Even Kublai himself only ruled immediately over China proper, and his empire beyond that was much less firmly knit together than is the Manchu empire even now. His cousins in the west soon proclaimed their independence, and in 1368 the Chinese rose *en masse* against their oppressors, who were promptly driven back to their native deserts and steppes. It must be conceded, however, that the Mongols were tolerant of foreign religions and foreign science. Islam, Christianity, and Buddhism all enjoyed as much countenance as Confucianism.

The priestly founder of the purely Chinese Ming dynasty, whose venerated tomb is still respectfully preserved, if not guarded, at Nanking, completely changed the face of affairs. China for the Chinese was his motto, and the provinces were soon reorganized, much on their present basis, with a firm hand. The Mongol policy of conquest and forced homage was modified, if not entirely abandoned. Corea, Tibet, Annam, and other bordering States were encouraged by just treatment to attach themselves voluntarily to the new empire, but otherwise left to administer themselves. Messages were sent by Frankish merchant envoys to Europe; the change of dynasty was notified to the Central Asian States; and a very lively sea-trade sprang up in the early part of the fifteenth century with Japan, Loochoo, Manila, Borneo, Java, Sumatra, Siam, India, Arabia, and the north-west parts of Africa. This was the only period in Chinese history (and it did not last many years) when Chinese commerce assumed a truly aggressive and even military aspect in the Indian Ocean; the accounts given by Marco Polo prove that the Mongol trading junks had frequented exactly the same ports as were a century later visited by powerful Chinese fleets. The disappointed Mongol hordes naturally endeavoured to avenge their dismissal to the deserts, and gave incessant trouble by hovering aggressively upon the northern frontiers, just as the Hiung-nu, the Turks, the Cathayans, and the Nüchêns had successively done before them. The very name of all these

nationalities had now utterly disappeared from men's minds. Mongol was the only name now for all Tartars, except that the powerful western Mongols, or Kalmucks, were usually distinguished as Eleuths. The Nüchêns, or Manchus, were loosely grouped as Uriangkha Mongols, and forgotten. Christianity utterly disappeared for over two centuries, and very little was heard of Islam. The Japanese, aroused to secular hostility against China partly through the recollection of Kublai Khan's abortive invasion, kept up incessant piratical attacks upon the coasts. The difficulty of repelling the Mongol attacks by land and the Japanese raids by sea led China to adopt a policy of exclusion, which was further accentuated when the Folangki, or Franks, in the shape of Portuguese and Spaniards, appeared upon the scene about 1520. They were not at first recognized as the old Fuh-lin, but were supposed to be strange savages from the southern ocean.

It may be said that, between the collapse of the Mongols and the arrival by sea of Europeans, China kept pretty closely within her shell. Marco Polo's story was long regarded in Italy as a mere sailor's yarn, and the ignorance of China throughout Europe was absolute. As for Zipangu, or Japan, it was appraised by us Westerners as a fictitious invention, until Mendez Pinto actually visited the place about 1542. During this period of comparatively peaceful seclusion, the Nüchên tribes, driven away by the Mongols, and for 300 years almost entirely forgotten, had time to grow strong in their distant obscurity. Under the new and ill-explained name of Manchu, they began to come into prominence on the Chinese frontier just at the very time Japan was nervously wrestling in her own domains with Christianity, and when the jealous Japanese Napoleon Hideyoshi was sending his Christian Generals to the front, like so many Uriahs, to attack China through Corea. Meanwhile eunuch misgovernment and excessive taxation had provoked serious internal rebellions in Shan Si and Ho Nan. Expiring China had succeeded, before these broke out, in saving Corea from permanent occupation by Japan, and the first Jesuit missionaries managed to imbue the Chinese Emperor with a kindly and tolerant feeling towards Christianity. At this auspicious moment, a lucky turn might have made China a Christian

country under friendly European tutelage : but it was already too late ; the hungry and discontented Chinese rebels took Peking ; the Emperor committed suicide ; the Manchu enemy was foolishly called in to assist ; and of course he did what all Tartars had done before him, and what the Russians seem to aim at now in Manchuria—he took the contested quarry for himself. Under pretext that there were no legitimate heirs to the Ming throne, the Manchu prince, in 1644, declared himself Emperor of China, and proceeded to extend and consolidate his conquests.

Many readers, after the events of the past three years, will think it incongruous when I suggest that the Manchu dynasty is, perhaps, the very best the Chinese ever had. But it is so. The first Emperor died young ; the second, K'ang-hi, ruled gloriously for sixty years, and has left a name which both in literature and in war is imperishable. He thoroughly conquered and consolidated the Chinese Empire, besides securing his position in Mongolia, Russian Siberia, and Corea. His grandson K'ien-lung also reigned for full sixty years ; he was one of the wittiest and most intelligent men that ever sat upon a throne. The Kalmucks, Tibet, Turkestan, Formosa, Annam, Nepaul, Burma—all these were either crushed or severely handled in turn ; and at last the boundaries of his vast empire were fixed as we see them marked now on the maps. Lord Macartney visited him just over a century ago.

Decay and rebellion set in with the nineteenth century just expired. None of the Emperors were particularly bad men as rulers, but they have all been inferior in capacity to the two excellent monarchs above specified. The introduction from India of opium on a large scale undoubtedly led to a hostile feeling against foreign trading concessions generally, just as the introduction of profitless religious disputes upon mere points in empty dogma exercised an unfavourable influence upon the reception accorded to European religions. The Opium War of 1839-42, the "Arrow" lorchas War of 1858-60, the Taiping rebellion of 1854-64, the Mussulman revolts in Yün Nan and Kashgaria, the stealthy advance of Russia, the Japanese seizure of Formosa in 1874, the French hostilities of 1884,—all these mark steps in disaster ; but, with



astonishing sagacity and vitality, China was gradually surviving the ill effects of all, and was consolidating her position, when the unfortunate Japanese war broke out. This blow fairly staggered China. As she attempted to struggle to her feet, Germany delivered a final knock-out blow in the shape of the Kiao Chou affair; then took place a rush for the spoils of the dying gladiator. In sheer desperation the old empire made one last mad dying lunge for freedom in the shape of the foolish "Boxer" revolt. Undoubtedly she would have been torn to pieces this time had it not been for the remnants of conscience ultimately exhibited by Great Britain, the United States, and Japan, for an alliance with which last-named gallant country I, with others, have pleaded from time to time—I am glad to say now, successfully.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE POPULATION AND REVENUE OF CHINA

IT has been occasionally reproached upon those who have dealt with Chinese subjects that they have been a little too ready to delve down into remote antiquity for a foundation upon which to build their theories. In the present instance, references to the past will be confined to a few indispensable statistical data.

The Rev. J. Ross, of Manchuria, is the only European student who has—at least, so far as I am aware—produced figures from ancient Chinese history indicating what the population was supposed to be at a given date. I possess the Chinese originals, but I have not verified all his figures, though I see no reason for doubting their accuracy. The period is too distant, and the social and economical conditions of those times are too little known to us, that we should accept these bare figures, apart from their context, as evidence bearing upon the population of modern times. I merely quote

them as an introductory illustration for purposes of proportion, and I ignore all numbers below a hundred thousand.

In A.D. 609, after the expulsion of the Tartar rulers, and under the strong unifying native dynasty of Sui, there were 8,900,000 families; but a few years later devastating wars with the Turks, bringing in their train the establishment of a new Chinese dynasty, greatly reduced this figure. In A.D. 723 there were 7,900,000 families and 45,500,000 souls; say, rather under six mouths to a family: the increase of families and souls in the same proportion went on steadily until A.D. 755, when we find there were 9,100,000 families and 53,000,000 souls. A fearful drop to 3,100,000 families had taken place by A.D. 781, in consequence of anarchy, civil war, and external invasions. This fact alone throws us on our beam ends so far as any chance of righting our historical position goes. The Thirty Years' War in Europe is but a Western instance of what has taken place every few centuries in China.

When the present Manchu dynasty had seated itself securely on the throne, it set about taking stock of its possessions. In 1651 there were 10,630,000 taxable units; in 1652 the total had gone up to 14,500,000; but this increase simply points to further conquests of territory; and there are then various ups and downs until 1657, when we reach our first secure basis of 18,600,000. From this time to 1672 there is steady progression year by year up to 19,500,000. But the "Revolt of the Three Satraps" had by 1676 gradually reduced this figure to 16,000,000, and it was not until 1683 that lost ground was fully recovered. From this time onwards we find the official returns are usually the same for pairs or triplets of years, showing apparently that they were no longer sent in annually; but still the increase was steady and fairly uniform up to 1712, when the Emperor resolved upon a new system. At this date the number of taxable heads was 24,600,000, and, roughly speaking, each taxable head paid one tael\* a year. The way it was done was this: The poll-tax was merged in the land-tax. Each taxable unit, say, was an acre of first-class ground, and there were at that time about

\* Six shillings and eightpence, but now only worth from half a crown to three shillings in gold.

100,000,000 English acres taxed. But that computation does not mean that only 100,000,000 acres were cultivated. Two second-class acres count as one good ; four poor as one good ; ten, or even twenty, barren as one good. In other words, nearly the whole available land in the empire (*i.e.* in China proper) was appropriated ; and, as the revenue was sufficient, the Emperor decided that in future, no matter how the population might increase, the land, being a fixture, ought never to pay more than 100,000,000 units divided amongst a quarter that number of taxable heads. Hence from 1713 to 1734 we have a double computation, divided into taxable and non-taxable units. By 1734 the taxable units had increased to 25,500,000 ; not because taxes had been any way enhanced contrary to the new rule, but (probably) because emigrants had brought Mongol lands under cultivation ; reclamations of marshes and river-beds had been made ; and the remaining scraps of untilled lands had been "raised to taxability." The progressive increase of untaxable heads is interesting, showing to us exactly, as it does, the rate of comparative growth year by year. In 1713 the "free heads" numbered 60,000, and this proportionate rate of increase upon the double total was pretty uniform up to 1734, when the total had reached 940,000.

During the Kalmuck wars of 1735-40, no returns were sent in ; but, so soon as the Emperor found time to turn his attention to home affairs, he asked : "What is the use of our counting taxable heads when they never increase, and untaxable heads when they pay no poll-tax or land revenue ? I want to know how many human souls we possess." Accordingly, in 1741 the first return of all ages, castes, and sexes was sent in, showing a total of 143,400,000 souls ; or (adding the 940,000 to 25,500,000) just a trifle under six souls to a (taxable or untaxable) family head—the same proportion as in A.D. 723. Of course, between 1734 and 1741 the untaxed heads must have increased. Let us therefore assume, from the official figures issued by the Emperor's own authority, that in 1741 there were 27,000,000 "doors," or families, containing 143,400,000 souls.

From this time to 1851, when the population had risen to 432,164,047, the official returns are given year by year, with

the following exceptions: 1747-48, 1757, 1768, 1777, 1780, 1789, 1820. It is not explained why they are not given in those years. The increase up to 1774 is steady, uniform, and unbroken; but in 1775 there is a sudden and unexplained jump from 221,000,000 to 265,000,000, which I can only guess is partly to be accounted for by the formal annexation of Turkestan, Kalmuckia, and Tibet; but all these together, including even Mongolia, Kokonor, and Manchuria, would scarcely account for 44,000,000 souls. I hope to elucidate the mystery some other time.

Starting from this new basis, the population increases regularly up to 313,000,000 in 1794, after which there is a great drop, in consequence of certain rebellions; low-water mark is reached in 1797, and it is not until 1805 that lost ground is recovered. Two remarks of the Emperor are worth noting as showing (1) that the returns were issued under his solemn authority, and (2) that there were good reasons required for sudden fluctuations. He says in 1793: "I notice that the total population for 1792 (307,500,000) is thirteen times the number of taxable heads in 1710; hence it is clear each taxable head now feeds a dozen mouths off the same land." In 1806, after the crushing of formidable rebellions, the Emperor "notices with pleasure an increase from 304,500,000 in 1804 to 332,000,000 in 1805;" alluding, of course, not to the rate of breeding, but to the pacification of territory and the possibility of once more securing full returns.

The vagaries of the Yellow River cause a good deal of irregularity during the next decade, and I may note (for the benefit of the student of original documents) that, when it is said "minus the returns of such a province not yet received," this qualification of a total does not appear to mean exactly that; but rather, elliptically, "quoting last year's returns for such a province, which has not yet sent its papers in." From this point things go on with uniformity until 1851, when the record total of 432,000,000 is reached. The book from which I take these official returns—the Tung-hwa-luh—had not been brought (for publication) beyond the year 1735 until ten years ago, and consequently the later returns which I give were unknown to the last generation of Europeans. But in

1862 the Rev. W. Lobscheid translated from the Russian, and published in Hong Kong, a report by M. Sacharoff of Peking, who had himself obtained from the Chinese Board of Revenue the Rolls for the years 1841 and 1842; these gave the totals as 413,457,311 and 414,686,994, which are exactly those given in my book. M. Sacharoff incidentally makes the remark that "the population for 1783 was 98,685,457 greater than that of 1757." Now 1757 is, as I have said, one of the blank years in the Tung-hwa-luh, and 1783 gives us 284,033,785; so that we get the missing figure 185,348,328 for 1757 to compare with 186,615,514 given for 1756. M. Sacharoff also gives the increase between 1782 and 1812 as 77,685,394, and that between 1812 and 1842 as 53,993,797: total, 131,679,191. M. Sacharoff's intermediate figures do not correspond with mine; but his total increase of 131,679,191 between 1782 and 1842 is sufficiently near mine of 132,864,319; especially when we bear in mind that the expression "from — to —," or "between — and —," often leaves it doubtful from or to which year the inclusion begins or extends; and this doubtful factor may also account for the apparent decrease between 1756 and 1757.

Having now examined the sole evidence upon which we can reasonably base our estimates, and arrived at conclusions which, though necessarily approximate and defective, are the only ones logically possible on the premises, let us see how far the Taiping rebellion of forty years ago reduced the population. In 1852 there was already a reduction of 100,000,000; and by 1860 (the last year for which official estimates are given) a further reduction of 70,000,000. The precise figures are 334,403,315 and 260,924,675. Of course this does not necessarily mean that 170,000,000 people perished in ten years (50,000 a day), but probably that the anarchy prevailing rendered it impossible to secure any returns at all in devastated districts. Peace has now reigned for 35 years at least, and it will therefore be pretty safe to assume that the increase between 1860 and 1895 was as great as that between 1797 (the next last low-water mark after a rebellion) and 1832; *i.e.* as great as the difference between 271,333,544 and 397,132,659. In other words, by applying to definite evidence rules of interpretation already



proved historically sound, we have a *prima facie* right to assume that the present minimum population of China is not far from 385,000,000.

The evidence we possess in support of this *prima facie* assumption once more comes through Russian sources; the Russians alone having taken the trouble to do what any one else can do in China, *i.e.* purchase the necessary official documents. But this evidence is always the same; it is simply the record of the Board of Revenue. There is no other. M. Popoff's returns were translated and published in Shanghai ten years ago; ten provinces were for 1882, and eight for 1879—a singular arrangement which seems to point to a practice such as I have above surmised to exist, that of continuing to use the same returns until the next set are sent in for the defaulting province. His total is 382,078,860, a figure at first sight twelve years too high; but it must be remembered that the Yellow River reduced the population between 1811 and 1821; so that, instead of 385,000,000 for 1895, we should add on ten years' increase to that figure. In 1828 this was, in fact, about the population; and by 1838 it had gone up to 409,000,000, which, therefore, by abstract reasoning should be the true figure for 1895. M. Popoff once more comes to the rescue. He has recently published in the Russian Geographical Society's Journal the returns for 1894, obtained, as usual, from his accommodating friends at the Board. His figures for the eighteen provinces of China proper are 421,870,716. But Formosa is included in this total, and in 1842 Formosa had not yet developed a true Chinese status, so that the difference between 409,000,000 and 421,870,000 (both on the basis of excluding Formosa) is not so very great.

Having now explained how the population of China came to be 432,000,000 in 1852 and 422,000,000 in 1894, I will give two tables, both obtained by M. Popoff, at different dates, from the Board, showing the effects upon the population of each province produced by the Taiping rebellion chiefly in the Yangtsze Valley, the Panthay rebellion in Yün Nan, and the Mussulman rebellion in Kan Suh. For convenience I knock off or add all fractions of 100,000 as being both uncertain and unessential.

Name of Province.	1842. Popoff.	1894. Popoff.	1879. Popoff.	1882. Popoff.	1885. (In case of Fuh Kien, 1884.)
An Hwei ...	36,600,000	35,800,000	20,600,000	—	None given
Chêh Kiang	30,400,000	11,800,000	—	11,600,000	11,700,000
Chih Li ...	36,900,000	29,400,000	17,900,000	—	None given
Fuh Kien ...	25,800,000	25,200,000	25,800,000	—	23,500,000
Ho Nan ...	29,100,000	21,000,000	—	22,100,000	22,100,000
Hu Nan ...	20,000,000	22,000,000	—	21,000,000	21,000,000
Hu Peh ...	28,600,000	34,300,000	—	33,400,000	33,600,000
Kan Suh ...	19,500,000	9,800,000	5,400,000	—	None given
Kiang Si ...	26,500,000	22,000,000	—	25,000,000	25,000,000
Kiang Su ...	39,600,000	24,600,000	—	21,000,000	21,000,000
Kwang Si ...	8,100,000	8,600,000	5,100,000	—	None given
Kwang Tung	21,100,000	29,900,000	—	30,000,000	30,000,000
Kwei Chou ...	5,700,000	4,800,000	7,700,000	—	None given
Shan Si ...	17,100,000	11,100,000	—	12,200,000	10,800,000
Shan Tung ...	36,200,000	37,400,000	—	36,200,000	36,500,000
Shen Si ...	10,300,000	8,400,000	8,400,000	—	8,300,000
Sz Ch'wan ...	22,300,000	79,500,000	—	67,700,000	71,100,000
Yiin Nan ...	5,800,000	6,200,000	11,800,000	—	None given
Rough totals	419,600,000	421,800,000	102,700,000	280,200,000	

It will be noticed that I give also three columns explanatory of the change of population between 1842 and 1894. Columns 1879 and 1882 combine to make M. Popoff's second total of 382,000,000 as above explained. The third column 1885 (in the case of Fuh Kien, 1884) is anonymous, but I think I recognize in it the hand of a very able British official, who, of course, had his reasons for privacy. It will be noticed that in every case where M. Popoff had been obliged to fall back upon 1879 to eke out his estimates for 1882, the anonymous writer had also failed (except in the case of Shen Si) to secure returns for 1885.

In the case of An Hwei we know from Père Havret, S.J., who has recently written a book on that province, that in 1761 the population was 22,800,000. After wandering over the province for many years, he estimated the population in 1892 at 25,000,000; but of course such casual estimates can have little value. In the case of Chêh Kiang, I possess the Governor's returns for 1879-93—always between eleven and twelve millions; moreover, I have myself tramped throughout the length and breadth of the province, and seen its desolation. Chih Li is unsatisfactory, for we do not know

if the metropolitan district is included, not to mention the Mongols: the population of the Jêhol (Mongol) military circuit was 725,000 in 1885. Fuh Kien's exact figures (25,799,556) are exactly the same for 1842 and 1879, so that we may be certain they have been "carried on" for many years. Ho Nan lost ground during the Yellow River flood of 1887. Hu Nan and Hu Peh need no justification. Yakub Beg and the Dungans almost depopulated Kan Suh previous to the Chinese reconquest in 1873-4; probably the Mussulman rebellion of 1895-6 has reduced the population to 8,000,000. There was a famine in Kiang Si a few years ago, but I am surprised to see the population so much reduced. Kiang Su (and part of Chêh Kiang) was the scene of Gordon's operations, and suffered most from the Taiping scourge; I suspect the Kiang Si and Kiang Su figures for 1894 have been accidentally transposed by M. Popoff, for Kiang Su could hardly increase 20 per cent. in ten years. Kwang Si was the birthplace of the Taiping rebellion, as it now is of another anti-dynastic rebellion. Kwang Tung has recently suffered from floods, drought, and plague. The Kwei Chou figures for 1879 are probably a misprint for 4,700,000: anyway, nothing has occurred between 1879 and 1895 to reduce the population, and I was twice there myself in 1880-1. On the other hand, the Panthay and Taiping rebellions both affected the province between 1852 and 1872. Shan Si was half depopulated by famine and rats during 1877-9; the Rev. D. Hill has published full accounts of the hideous suffering undergone. Shan Tung is stationary; it sends off its surplus population to Manchuria, Mongolia, and even Corea. Shen Si suffered by the Dungan rebellion. I cannot possibly believe that the Sz Ch'wan people trebled their numbers in forty years. I have travelled on foot thousands of miles in that province, which is particularly remarkable for the small size of its chief towns; also for the almost entire absence of plains exceeding a few miles in extent. The capital is the only really populous town, and its plain is the only extensive plain. Certainly, there is a vast and steady immigration of Kiang Si, Hu Nan, Hu Peh, and Shen Si men; but at least half the province is the almost inaccessible resort of Lolos and Tibetan tribes. True,



peace and prosperity have reigned for fifty years, and the figures given are positive. I simply do not believe them, and leave readers to judge for themselves whether a mountainous country like Switzerland, with a cultivated area not greater than that of France, can support a population double that of France. If true, then the maximum revenue of six millions means that each soul only contributes threepence a year for all charges and taxes put together. As to Yün Nan there must be some mistake, the Panthay rebellion having desolated the whole province; probably the figure 11,800,000 for 1879 should be 4,800,000.

The principles upon which the Chinese revenue is collected were explained in a series of letters which I wrote to the *Times* during the year 1896 (18th and 27th August, 12th and 15th September, 31st December). Since then Mr. G. J. Jamieson, Consul-General at Shanghai, now retired, has contributed a paper based on the same native evidence (Foreign Office Reports, No. 415, 1897). I now furnish an amended statement of what I conceive the Chinese revenue to be :—

The accompanying Revenue Table has been prepared with care from the accounts furnished to the Emperor by his Viceroys within the past twenty years. Like the Population Table, it is notably defective, in that the figures of each item for one and the same year are rarely obtainable; the Foreign Customs column alone is uniformly taken for the year 1896, and the true gross total is (including fractions of 1000) 21,489,057 taels. If the Kowloon (Hong Kong) and Lappa (Macao) stations are included, another million must be added, and the total becomes 22,579,000; but these two places are not exactly in China, and the revenue is practically contributed by the Chinese residing in British and Portuguese colonies.

Of the sixteen perpendicular columns only half the number can be taken seriously in the sense of rateable revenue. The 6,334,000 taels of loans, benevolences, etc., raised during the Japanese war, manifestly have no place in continuous provincial economy, and are therefore not included in either the perpendicular or the horizontal columns making up from different aspects the one total of 97,077,000. Subsidies from one province to the other, of course, cannot be allowed to

# REVENUE RECEIPTS.

Name of Province.	Money Land-tax.	Grain-tax, value in Money, commuted or not.	Taxes of all kinds on Salt, direct or indirect.	Foreign Customs Col-lectorate.	Likin, excluding that on Salt and Opium.	Taxes on Native Opium, and Opium Licences.	Miscellaneous Un-defined Taxes, Licences, Fees, etc.	Duties on Reed Flats.	Rents on Special Ten-ures.	Corvees (Roughly valued).	Sale of Office and Titles.	Subsidies from Other Pro-vinces.	Native Loans and Benevo- lences.	Tea Taxes.	Fuel and Grain Taxes.	Total.
An Hwei	1,357,000	900,000	200,000	596,000	500,000	20,000	50,000	50,000	—	—	—	10,000	1895 100,000	—	1895-6 560,000	4,033,000
Chên Kiang	1,400,000	1,100,000	40,000	1,300,000	1,400,000	20,000	—	—	10,000	—	16,000	—	100,000	—	—	5,786,000
Chih Li	2,600,000	—	450,000	840,000	260,000	25,000	35,000	30,000	200,000	10,000	2,600,000	1,400,000	—	—	—	6,360,000
Fuh Kien	1,000,000	—	500,000	2,400,000	1,200,000	45,000	55,000	—	—	—	50,000	—	—	600,000	—	6,035,000
Ho Nan	2,300,000	300,000	400,000	—	110,000	50,000	35,000	—	—	20,000	—	20,000	1895	—	—	3,235,000
Hu Nan	1,200,000	175,000	400,000	—	500,000	250,000	40,000	—	25,000	15,000	—	—	50,000	60,000	100,000	2,765,000
Hu Peh	1,000,000	420,000	1,000,000	2,350,000	1,600,000	500,000	60,000	25,000	35,000	20,000	—	—	130,000	60,000	—	7,320,000
Kan Suh	220,000	275,000	50,000	1,000	100,000	25,000	65,000	—	80,000	—	20,000	5,000,000	1895	80,000	—	5,946,000
Kiang Si	1,300,000	800,000	450,000	1,000,000	1,000,000	20,000	50,000	10,000	—	—	70,000	—	320,000	50,000	10,000	4,800,000
Kiang Su	1,500,000	2,500,000	200,000	8,800,000	2,500,000	250,000	50,000	100,000	—	—	—	800,000	1894-5 5,125,000	50,000	—	21,450,000
Kwang Si	350,000	150,000	200,000	100,000	—	100,000	30,000	—	—	—	—	200,000	—	—	—	1,730,000
Kwang Tung	1,300,000	—	535,000	3,200,000	800,000	20,000	1,000,000	—	10,000	—	10,000	497,000	1895	—	—	7,525,000
Kwei Chou	110,000	—	200,000	—	100,000	100,000	90,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,107,000
Shan Si	3,300,000	—	500,000	—	60,000	30,000	60,000	—	10,000	10,000	—	—	100,000	—	—	4,040,000
Shan Tung	2,800,000	500,000	300,000	425,000	100,000	75,000	50,000	—	—	—	—	100,000	1895	—	—	4,530,000
Shen Si	1,650,000	—	100,000	—	350,000	200,000	50,000	—	20,000	—	—	—	384,000	—	—	2,380,000
Sz Ch'wan	700,000	—	2,000,000	320,000	1,000,000	200,000	25,000	—	—	25,000	50,000	—	—	—	—	6,050,000
Yün Nan	1,600,000 250,000	50,000 250,000	80,000 —	150,000	350,000	30,000	40,000	—	—	10,000	50,000	555,000	—	—	—	1,985,000
Total	25,887,000	7,420,000	12,600,000	21,482,000	11,930,000	1,960,000	1,865,000	215,000	390,000	110,000	266,000	8,582,000	1895 6,334,000	900,000	110,000	97,077,000
Shing King	80,000	100,000	450,000	570,000	180,000	800,000	—	—	100,000	—	—	200,000	—	—	—	3,340,000
Kirin	—	20,000	—	—	50,000	20,000	—	—	120,000	—	—	300,000	—	—	—	470,000
Tsitsihar	—	—	10,000	—	—	50,000	300,000	—	—	—	—	200,000	—	—	—	680,000
Grand total	25,967,000	7,540,000	13,050,000	22,052,000	12,160,000	2,830,000	2,165,000	215,000	690,000	110,000	266,000	9,282,000	1895 6,334,000	900,000	110,000	101,567,000

count twice as revenue receipts; hence 8,582,000 must be knocked off the above gross receipts. The enormous tax on grain export from An Hwei in 1895-6 is not included in the additions, as it was quite an exceptional affair; and in all cases duties on rice are fitful and uncertain, accordingly as there may be scarcity or plenty in this or that province; they are, moreover, countervailed by the fact that official funds have to be spent elsewhere in retailing rice at or below cost price. Tea duties are of no very great importance except in Fuh Kien, and even there it is doubtful whether they are not already counted in the *likin*, or in the native customs totals. As to Duties on Reed Flats, Rents on Special Tenures, Corvées and Purveyances, Sale of Titles, etc., all these together fall short of a million, and being all equally vague and capricious, may well go to swell the 1,865,000 of Miscellaneous. The extra million of Miscellaneous under Kwang Tung refers to the Examination Lottery, which is farmed out for an enormous bonus every few years, apart from annual royalties on tickets sold; the Chinese Government is ashamed of this iniquitous income, but is obliged to accept it in self-defence, as otherwise Macao "operates" the business, and the Portuguese get the money. Ten per cent. of the Foreign Customs Revenue must be deducted for running expenses; so that (even including Lappa and Kowloon) 20,000,000 net is the utmost we can (*i.e.* in 1899) allow under that head. Of the Manchurian tables at the foot of the Chinese totals I shall speak separately.

I will compare the conclusions to which I have come, after two years of further reflection, with my totals given in the *Times*, and also with Mr. Jamieson's computations as published in the Foreign Office Report. The three Manchurian provinces are in all cases excluded, and Mr. Jamieson's Foreign Customs are for 1893.

The fourth column alludes to an official estimate presented to the Emperor by the Board, to which attention was drawn in the *Economist* of the 3rd of April, 1897. As the Board's own total is "over 80,000,000," it is evident a misprint of 10,000,000 has somewhere occurred. The Board does not regard Tonnage Dues, Collections on Chinese Steamers, and Foreign Collected *Likin* as "Foreign Customs:" hence the swollen "Miscellaneous," which probably covers those three items and a

Head of Revenue.	The Times.	Jamieson.	Present paper.	Board's Report, 1897.
Foreign customs ...	21,000,000	21,989,000	21,482,000	15,000,000
Land tax ... ..	20,000,000	25,088,000	25,887,000	10,000,000
Salt ... ..	10,000,000	13,659,000	12,600,000	12,000,000
<i>Likin</i> ... ..	15,000,000	12,952,000	11,930,000	13,000,000
Native customs ...	3,000,000	1,000,000	3,360,000	2,000,000
Miscellaneous ...	3,000,000	5,500,000	{ 1,865,000 1,991,000 }	15,000,000
Totals ... ..	72,000,000	80,188,000	79,115,000	67,000,000

Head of Revenue.	The Times.	Jamieson.	Present paper.	Board's Report, 1897.
Brought forward ...	72,000,000	80,188,000	79,115,000	67,000,000
Grain tax ... ..	Excluded	6,562,000	7,420,000	Excluded
Native opium ... ..	Excluded	2,229,000	1,960,000	Excluded
Tea taxes, pawnshops, and benevolences ...	} NOT INCLUDED.			3,500,000
Savings on reduced army				530,000
Amended totals.	72,000,000	88,979,000	88,495,000	71,030,000
Grain tax and native opium excluded; now added ... ..	9,380,000			
By supposed error of 10,000,000 in land tax	—	—	—	10,000,000
	81,380,000	88,979,000	88,495,000	81,030,000

multitude of other mysteries. Salt, *Likin*, Tea Taxes, and Native Customs are apt to "run into each other like dogs' teeth," as the Chinese say. The main point of the comparison is that the two rough estimates of myself and the Board agree within 250,000 taels; and that the worked-out estimates of myself and Mr. Jamieson agree within 484,000 taels; each of the three parties having worked in ignorance of what the other two were doing.

To complete the subject, I append to the Revenue Table for China proper further estimates for Manchuria, a subject upon which I have also addressed two letters to the *Times* (May 23 and August 1, 1898). According to M. Popoff's estimates (based upon the Board's documents) the total

population of all Manchuria does not exceed six millions. The following are his figures for 1894:—

	Popoff's Population.	Payers of Land Tax, 1743.	Land Tax, 1753, paid (taels).	Yield in Taels now according to Regulation (Jamieson).
Shing King ( <i>alias</i> Fêng- t'ien, <i>alias</i> Kwan-tung, <i>alias</i> Liao-tung) or Manchuria proper ...	4,724,674	47,124	38,110	221,774
Kirin (cradle of the race)	626,232	} Not given	Not given	Not given
Tsitsihar ( <i>alias</i> Hêh-lung Kiang) ... ..	400,000			
	5,750,906	47,124	38,110	221,774

The population exceeded 7,500,000 in 1893, but floods and famine carried away great numbers. The large revenue of Manchuria proper has only been raised within the last two years, and the gold-mines of Tsitsihar are a very uncertain asset. Previous to the Japanese war, it may be said in round terms that each of the three Manchurian provinces required a subsidy of 500,000 taels a year, but a fearful condition of confusion and peculation reigned in all departments.

Though we are thus able to get near the total revenue figures, it would puzzle the shrewdest firm of chartered accountants to arrive at an exact total for the *per contra*. Indeed, were it possible at all clearly to unravel the tangled web of Chinese peculation, the thorough reform of the finances would be merely the matter of a few months' work by Sir Robert Hart and his men. However, I herewith furnish the best table I can. It will be seen from the last column but one that one-third of the total receipts cannot be accounted for in detail at all, and that the proportion of unaccountability varies with each province. It is certain that official authorized pay must amount in each case to half a million or a million taels, according to the number of cities. On the other hand, it must be remembered that ironclads, torpedo-boats, cruisers, Krupp and Armstrong guns, and so on, have all to be paid for, chiefly by the Governments of



## EXPENDITURE.

Name of Province.	Remittances to Peking Treasury in Cash.	Value of Rice and Grain (or its commutation in silver) sent to Peking.	Remittances to the Palace or Privy Purse, Mews, etc., etc.	Cost of sending Grain to Peking.	Remittances for North-East Frontier Defence.	Remittances for North-West Frontier (Kansu and Shensi) and Armies.	Aids to Peking Salary and Pay for civil and military (ill-defined).	Ch'ow-pai Fund (for special defence and other purposes not specified).	Ku-pen Fund (for special Peking defence purposes not specified).	Admiralty or Naval Defence Fund.	Railway Fund (mixed inextricably with Navy funds).	Local Armies, Navies, and Ports.	Local Aerials, Shang-Tientsin Aerials.	Aids to Yellow River Canal and other local rivers (floods).	Proportion ten per cent. Foreign Customs Ex-penses.	General Provincial administration and other matters lumped in one.	Aids to support other poorer Provinces.	Total.
An Hwei	400,000	600,000	30,000	400,000	150,000	200,000	7,000	40,000	—	—	—	500,000	—	30,000	59,600	1,586,400	30,000	4,033,000
Chên Kiang	920,000	700,000	60,000	400,000	160,000	—	235,000	450,000	60,000	320,000	50,000	1,100,000	123,000	12,000	130,000	225,000	200,000	5,786,000
Chih Li	300,000	—	210,000	—	25,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	4,000,000	350,000	90,000	84,000	891,000	210,000	6,360,000
Fuh Kien	900,000	—	160,000	—	140,000	200,000	235,000	200,000	60,000	250,000	50,000	1,500,000	600,000	5,000	240,000	1,445,000	50,000	6,035,000
Ho Nan	200,000	300,000	5,000	—	20,000	610,000	8,000	—	—	—	50,000	500,000	12,000	500,000	—	612,000	358,000	3,235,000
Hu Nan	470,000	180,000	21,000	—	80,000	160,000	8,000	80,000	60,000	—	50,000	500,000	—	—	—	701,000	450,000	2,765,000
Hu Peh	900,000	300,000	50,000	—	180,000	330,000	235,000	280,000	60,000	240,000	50,000	1,200,000	200,000	—	235,000	1,235,000	764,000	7,320,000
Kan Suh	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	20,000	—	3,400,000	—	—	—	491,000	—	5,946,000
Kiang Si	600,000	600,000	150,000	—	130,000	360,000	124,000	240,000	60,000	240,000	50,000	700,000	—	10,000	100,000	1,197,000	239,000	4,800,000
Kiang Su	800,000	1,400,000	150,000	900,000	180,000	120,000	325,000	240,000	60,000	200,000	50,000	4,000,000	1,800,000	50,000	880,000	950,000	1,565,000	21,450,000
Kwang Si	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	500,000	—	—	10,000	1,220,000	—	1,730,000
Kwang Tung	600,000	—	350,000	—	200,000	—	364,000	320,000	120,000	100,000	50,000	2,500,000	100,000	20,000	320,000	2,222,000	190,000	7,525,000
Kwei Chou	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	900,000	—	—	—	10,000	—	1,107,000
Shan Si	500,000	—	120,000	—	100,000	500,000	8,000	—	60,000	—	50,000	500,000	20,000	—	—	197,000	20,000	4,040,000
Shan Tung	700,000	—	10,000	—	120,000	—	12,000	—	60,000	30,000	50,000	700,000	120,000	672,000	42,000	15,000	180,000	4,530,000
Shen Si	50,000	—	5,000	—	—	200,000	3,000	—	—	50,000	—	1,400,000	—	—	—	672,000	—	2,380,000
Sz Ch'wan	450,000	—	20,000	—	270,000	980,000	14,000	—	60,000	—	50,000	800,000	60,000	—	34,000	100,000	780,000	6,050,000
Yün Nan	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	500,000	—	—	15,000	250,000	—	1,985,000
Total	7,790,000	4,080,000	1,341,000	1,700,000	1,755,000	3,660,000	1,572,000	1,610,000	660,000	1,450,000	550,000	25,200,000	3,385,000	1,389,000	2,147,600	2,453,000	4,745,000	97,077,000
Shing King	50,000	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,200,000	—	—	57,000	31,540,000	30,000	3,340,000
Kirin	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	10,000	—	470,000
Tsitsihar	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	680,000
Grand total	7,840,000	4,080,000	1,341,000	1,700,000	1,755,000	3,660,000	1,572,000	1,610,000	660,000	1,450,000	550,000	27,370,000	3,385,000	1,389,000	2,204,600	36,225,000	4,775,000	101,567,000

\* The upper of the two sets of figures in the last column but two refers to certain defined Miscellaneous items such as I mention, but for which I have no separate space; the lower refers to presumed large expenditure on salaries and munitions of war concerning which no particulars are forthcoming.



Kiang Su, Chih Li, Hu Peh, and Kwang Tung. Then there are the Imperial Tailors or Silk Commissioners at Nanking, Soochow, and Hangchow; the envoys abroad; the support of Duke Confucius' temple and court; luxuries, drugs, timber, and miscellaneous tributes in kind for Peking; sea-walls and dykes; rice lighters; the payment of at least 200,000 Manchu "bannermen" at Peking, as to which I possess no accounts, but which must absorb 4,000,000 taels and 1,000,000 peculs of rice at the most moderate computation. The local loans must be paid off; the walling in of the reconquered Turkestan cities has to be paid for; the Board and the eunuchs want their "rice money;" there are many colleges and training schools at Peking, Canton, Nanking, Tientsin, Wuchang, etc. There is the copper-mining, under official auspices, of Yün Nan; official herds in Mongolia and Manchuria; presents for Mongol princes; support of parks and hunting-grounds; and so on. Of all these, exact statements are lacking. The remittances to Peking in hard cash have for many years been fixed at 7,000,000 "ordinary," plus 1,000,000 extra, so that our worked-out total of 7,790,000 comes near the mark. Some of the grain tax is retained to feed provincial Manchu garrisons, and several provinces use up all their own grain tax. The Palace remittances are certainly now fixed at very near the detailed total I give. The North-East Fund is fixed at 2,000,000, but for many years it has admittedly been in arrear. The North-West Fund of 4,800,000 has always been promptly remitted, and all the viceroys and governors concerned were thanked for doing so in 1896; but, as will be seen, I am 1,200,000 taels short in the detail. Both these funds simply mean "Defence against Russia." The impecunious Peking Officials Fund, Extra Military Rations Fund, and Extra Rations in place of Fuh Kien Remittances Fund, I lump together; but I have never quite understood them, and in any case they are as often as not "diverted," or, as the French say, used as *virements*. The *Ku-pên* Fund is always steady. The Admiralty Fund is very capricious, and in any event, for some strange reason, only four-fifths of the sums asked need be sent. In some mysterious way the Railway Fund (pretty steady) is mixed up with it; but also,

by some hocus-pocus, is occasionally "veered" to do duty for the Empress' private pleasures. "Local armies" absorb at least half of the total sum for the expenditure of which I can account, and this is the greatest peculation preserve in the Empire. The Emperor recently gave orders for seven-tenths to be at once abolished; but each province fights fiercely for its "squeezes." There are supposed to be 650,000 "green flag" troops in the eighteen provinces, which means about 10,000,000 taels a year utterly wasted; not to mention the highly paid "trained braves," who in many cases show signs of degenerating like the "greens." I have the accounts of all the arsenals, and am fairly sure of my ground there; but of course deduction, in the case of Shanghai and Tientsin, must be mentally made of the sums contributed to their Arsenals by Chêh Kiang, Shan Tung, etc. The Yellow River, South River (Canal), and Yung Ting River (Peking) absorb varying sums according to whether there is or is not a flood for the year. The Aids in Support (like the Subsidies on the other side) cannot reasonably be counted twice, as they already form part of the total expenditure of the provinces granting them.

I have been tied down to space, and cannot therefore enlarge further upon the subject of expenditure. No attempt has yet been made to draw up a Chinese budget, and I can only hope, therefore, that this skeleton table, which at best is very defective, may be of service in indicating the way for future inquirers. At present the only plan is to arrest every fugitive statement of official fact, nail it down, group it, collate it, and dish it up with others of its kind in its presumed place; accepting this as statistics until the moment shall arrive when some financier pounces upon the quarry, and finds it possible to turn chaos into order.

I may make one more remark. The 4,800,000 contributed by the provinces to Kan Suh seems to be expended by Kan Suh (3,400,000) and Shen Si (1,400,000) combined; it all depends, however, upon what is meant by "intra-mark" and "extra-mark;" or, in other words, from where the "military" frontier is reckoned.

As to the military expenditure of Manchuria proper, it must be mentioned that the cost of General Sung's *I-kiin*

army at Port Arthur (later at Newchwang) has been included under Chih Li expenditure; and, generally speaking, the contributions of Manchuria to "Northern Ocean" naval expenditure are so dovetailed in with Chih Li contributions to Manchurian army expenditure that it is difficult to get a clear view of the whole. Moreover, the Chinese department of the Newchwang customs (confusingly styled Shan-hai Kwan, though that place is far away) seems to be under the Viceroy of Chih Li, at least for some purposes.

In order to strike a balance between the Revenue and the Expenditure Tables, I have been obliged to adopt the device of inserting a minus quantity of 280,000 taels under the head of unexplained Kirin outgoings. Kirin is the one province whose obvious incomings, even including subsidies, are short of its expenditure; hence the sum is rather an unexplained asset than an unexplained shortage. The fact is, I can find out very little of Manchurian receipts and expenditure (three provinces), and I only happen to know the exact receipts for 1897 in Manchuria proper because the Generalissimo or Viceroy has quite recently reported them; but it is not likely that they will continue at so high a figure, as the chief item (opium licences, etc.) savours of time monopolies and bonuses paid in advance. The whole question of Manchurian receipts and expenditure is a very loose one, and I only include those three provinces in order to indicate a basis for future inquiry.

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Since the above was first printed, the "Boxer" troubles have saddled China with an additional Tls.18,700,000 a year, apart from losses on exchange; but the sources of revenue remain much as before, except that the price of salt has been generally raised, foreign import duties have been increased, *likin* and native customs have been in part made over to Sir Robert Hart's administration, and certain of the war funds formerly sent to Peking have been diverted to the service of foreign loans.

## BOOK II

### *THE "BOXER" WARS*

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE REVOLT OF THE "BOXERS" IN CHINA

THE following Imperial decree was issued in the name of the Emperor on April 13, 1900: "The establishment by the rural population in each province of militia for their own protection, and for the preservation of their lives and families, is at bottom simply the good old ancestral practice of keeping a look-out and lending mutual assistance; and so long as those concerned mind their own business, there is no reason why they should be interfered with. All that is to be feared is that amongst such persons the good and the bad may get mixed, and that pretexts may be taken to raise trouble with native Christians. It must be remembered that the Sovereign regards all with equal benevolence, without distinction of territorial division, for which reason the populations concerned should obey the spirit of this idea, and refrain from giving vent to their private resentments, in such wise as to cause hostility and render themselves liable to punishment. Let the governors-general and governors concerned give strict directions to local authorities to issue plain-speaking proclamations as occasion may require, calling upon all persons to attend to their own affairs, and always keep on peaceful terms with others, not ignoring the spirit of these earnest exhortations."

It is highly probable that the above document, cautiously worded as it is by the Empress-Dowager's advisers, has special tacit reference to the so-called "Boxers;" for

although anti-Christian troubles are breaking out in the Canton, Ningpo, and other regions, nothing touching Europeans has occurred of so grave a nature as the murders of Mr. Brooks in Shan Tung, and later, it appears, of certain Belgian engineers. Moreover, the native newspapers, in which the above decree is published a few days later, note with alarm that the "Boxer" movement has spread with great rapidity across the province of Chih Li right up to the neighbourhood of Newchwang, where many immature youths in their teens have been gained over by the propaganda. Hitherto, in treating of rebels and revolvers, the native press has made little specific allusion to the *i-ho-k'üan*, or "Patriotic Peace Fists;" but the best of them—the *Shên Pao* of April 22—says it is now high time that the authorities "patch things up before the rain comes, and diminish the fuel before the fire rages."

Touching the *raison d'être* of the fisticuff fraternity, it may be explained that, concurrently with the vigorous reforms recently introduced into the Chinese army, each province has, since the German attack upon Kiao Chou, been directed to furbish up its old *t'wan-lien*, or "posse of the districts." Shan Tung, as the province most immediately threatened with "rain and fire," has naturally not been behindhand; and the result is that yeomanry or militia, at first encouraged by the authorities (as explained) by Imperial command for the protection of the villages, have been worked upon by mischievous persons or secret societies—notably the Great Sword Society—in such a way as to develop into a serious danger to the State. Hence the delicate position of the Central Government, which has created what the Chinese call a "tiger-ride \* situation;"—that is, the only way for the Government or rider to escape being eaten is to stick fast to the tiger's back, and trust to luck for what the capricious beast will do. The use of the word "*i*" is ominous of evil to the Manchu dynasty, for this term has always been employed by "patriots," such as those who turned out the Turks in 620, and the Mongols in 1360. The original idea of the Central Government was to develop a defensive "patriotism" against the Germans and Christians, notably the Catholics,

\* The Empress, a month later, actually used this expression (Note, 1903).



who have now been weakly provided by the imbecile Chinese Government with an official status, giving them illimitable power to intrigue and create mischief; but the reforming and revolutionary element surreptitiously regard the "i" as referring to Chinese rights against those of Manchus, and it is impossible for the old women of the Tsung-li Yamèn to say how far blustering generals like Tung Fuh-siang may not take this objectionable view of the word "i."

The situation in North China is now (June 5, 1900) undoubtedly serious, and it is by no means unlikely that the degenerate Manchu dynasty, which began so well, will have disappeared before the summer is out. Nor is that a matter for unqualified regret, for it is now hopelessly corrupt, cowardly, and inefficient; worst of all, it is vacillating, for a persistent villain is a better administrator to have than a weak old simpleton, willing to be hoodwinked. But at the same time the Chinese themselves are politically as treacherous as the Manchus, besides being infinitely more crafty; and therefore, whatever happens, it is highly desirable that European Powers (including America and Japan in this term) should stand together and prevent the "yellow corpse" from putrefying their own existence. Nothing could be more fatuous or fatal than for this or that Power to "believe in" China, and to bolster her up against the demands of the other Powers with a view to securing special privileges. Whatever our rivalries and jealousies, we Europeans, including even Russia, are all imbued with the one spirit of humanity, justice, and progress, summed up in the word "Christian;" and this is none the less so though half of us may be atheists, freethinkers, and Jews; for it is the spirit of Christianity imbibed with our mothers' milk which forms our minds, even if we reject the puerilities of this or that dogma; nor is it any the less so because we happen to be hostile to, and even at war with, each other. In the Far East all Europeans are bound together by a species of sympathy of which people at home have little idea; but even at home this feeling of Christian unity is easily realized when it is brought into contrast with the "yellow corpse." It is satisfactory to see that, so far, Europeans are working together, and it is to be hoped that, whilst keeping an intelligent eye upon their own separate



interests, the Powers will not do anything so fatal to their future solidarity as to break up the concert in order to admit the discordant music of the gong. Every Chinese dynasty, and every Tartar dynasty ruling China, has disappeared in a pandemonium of anarchy and butchery. The Manchu dynasty seems bound to go in the same way, and the only thing is to localize the evil and let the anarchists cook in their own juice until they are tired of cooking, taking care that as few European interests as possible are injured. Compared with Asiatic dynasties generally, the Manchu dynasty was at first excellent and intelligent: even now it is the least evil of any Chinese or Tartar dynasty at the time of its tottering to a fall. But why support a wretched political system which devotes half its revenues to the feeding of an idle pack of useless and crapulous "bannermen;" which never does anything whatever for the improvement of the people; which persists in a rotten and wasteful system of finance; encourages its officers to peculate and falsify accounts; sanctions torture of the most cruel kind; denies all justice to political offenders; destroys its women's feet—or permits the Chinese to do so; and renders scant justice to any man? The well-meaning legitimately selected Emperor is practically a victim to the assassin already. For whose good is it to support such a dynasty? Being there, the dynasty is convenient to us in so far that it remains a tool which we can handle for our own purposes in a gingerly way without the necessity of hunting for a new tool which might possibly cut us. But it has no other use under the present usurper and her minions. It is out of the question to substitute a Chinese dynasty, for there is no family in China whose name carries respect and weight throughout the provinces. China seems fatally bound to be ruled by strangers, and it is in the interest of her hundreds of millions—hostile to us only through ignorance—that it should be so. But things must not be allowed to come with a rush. If the "Boxers" or any other society once gain headway, a fearful amount of useless bloodshed and wanton destruction will take place; so the first and most urgent thing is to restore order wherever threatened, and keep the military adventurers on the right side. It does not in the least matter who runs the machine during this restive

stage, so long as it is run on commission steadily and unflinchingly. Sir Robert Hart, with the co-operation of the "concert of Ministers," would do as well as any one else—perhaps better, for he is the one solitary instance in China affairs of a man who knows what he wants to do, holds his tongue, and does it. Shareholders need not in any case be particularly anxious about their dividends, for, whatever takes place, China's sole "solid" asset is the £1,000,000 sterling derived from foreign trade, and none of that will be allowed to leave foreign control in the event of rebellion.

It is high time now that, after two thousand years of political serfdom, the intelligent and industrious Chinese people, who are excellent municipal and village organizers, should have recognized rights conferred upon them. Their political requirements, as crudely specified by K'ang Yu-wei, must go hand-in-hand with their material development. It is impossible to give them railways, cheap newspapers, telegraphs, steamers, and, in short, the latest results of progress generally, and yet expect them to stagnate peacefully in their old docility and oblivion. K'ang Yu-wei himself should be thrust aside as a dangerous agitator, meddling with matters he only half understands. Russia should be allowed a free hand in the organization of the Manchurian provinces, for the simple reason that no one else can possibly do it ; but the "original" rights of others should be clearly stipulated for. In the same way Germany may reasonably put Shan Tung in order, without in any way treading upon others' toes. We and Japan must keep the Shan-hai Kwan open. At the "proper moment" we ourselves should be prepared to hold the gates and the lanes of the Yangtsze ; this we ought to be able to do as easily now as we did during the Taiping rebellion. France in Hainan, Kwang Si, and parts of Yün Nan and Kwang Tung ; Japan in Fuh Kien ; Italy in Chêh Kiang ; ourselves, again, in Yün Nan and Kwang Tung ; the Indian Government in Tibet ; the Russians in Ili—here we have work cut out for all ; and, starting from these bases, there is no reason why we should not each steadily advance year by year into our respective Hinterlands, and gradually turn the corpse into healthy meat. It is not necessary to commit acts of aggression or conquest.

Amongst modern missionary reforms, none is more remarkable or worthy of admiration than the Anti-Foot-binding, or Tien-tsu Hwei, started by Mrs. Archibald Little. The fact that so pig-headedly conservative a people as the Chinese are actually rising to the height of this reform amply illustrates how easy our general work will be when the ignorant people discover that we are really labouring for their benefit. Missionaries of all kinds should have a free hand, but under consular control; and Lord Salisbury never came to a wiser decision than when he accepted Dr. Temple's recommendation to decline an official status for the Protestant half of them.

P.S.—It is now (June 11, 1900) a week since the above was written, and the events of the past seven days furnish readers with the means of judging the accuracy of the above forecasts.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE "BOXERS"

FOR some months previous to the introduction of the word "Boxers" into newspaper literature, news had come from time to time through the missionaries in Shan Tung of the restless doings of the "Great Knife Society" on the southern borders of that province. The occupation of Kiao Chou by the Germans, and the cession to the British of Wei-hai Wei, only increased the uneasy feeling that famines, floods, and the menaces of secret societies had for some time locally aroused in men's minds. Things were made worse by the bursting of the Yellow River banks, and in November, 1898, Li Hung-chang was sent to inquire into the disaster. Some one seems to have denounced both him and the Governor, Chang Ju-mei, for corruption in connection with this inquiry; at any rate, the latter was suddenly removed from his post, and a Manchu, named Yühien, who had been Treasurer of

Hu Nan, acting as Tartar-General at Nanking, was sent in his place. Yü-hien had never occupied high civil office before, and had not been long at his post before he began to display, even in military affairs, more than the ordinary Manchu ineptitude, ignorance, and arrogance. His predecessors, Li Ping-hêng and Chang Ju-mei, however reactionary, had at least made some sort of an honest effort to purify the administration and reform the army ; but this foolish man at once gave orders that the old gingalls, shields, and spear-drill should be resumed ; all foreign-trained instructors dismissed ; and all offers of good steel guns made to him by German commercial travellers refused. This foolishness by itself would not have mattered much—in fact, it rather tended to preserve the peace ; but it so happened that just at the same time Imperial orders came to this province, amongst others, to at once furbish up its old *t'wan*, or “posse” of the districts—the militia troops of the old school so amusingly described by the Abbé Huc—who caper about with antiquated weapons, and are more like clowns and mountebanks than soldiers. This order exactly suited the mulish and conservative mind of Yü-hien ; but, unfortunately for the peace of the world, it also suited the secret society men ; and in the autumn of 1899 the doings of the Great Knife Society, and of a new sect called by the missionary correspondents “Boxers,” began to attract serious attention in the south-west of Shan Tung : their motto was “For China, against Foreigners ;” but up to the close of that year their efforts to get up a big row had been vain. Possibly the reason was in part that the missionary troubles previously caused by the Great Knife Society in North Kiang Su had only recently (1896) been patched up with some trouble, and the border authorities had not yet relaxed their general vigilance. The next thing that was heard was that this miserable specimen of a governor had been impeached for incompetence, the Chinese statement being that he had instigated a subordinate military officer to murder about 200 innocent gentry and people. The missionaries, on the other hand, reported that the Great Knife Society, under the new name of “Boxers,” was receiving secret encouragement at his hands, and that a “battle” had been fought at P'ing-yüan (to the north of the Governor's capital), with a loss to the Society

of 200 men ; there were other stories of attacks upon Roman Catholic missions under the very nose of the Governor's troops ; suspicions that he was giving arms to the rioters ; and so on. Whatever the exact truth may be, every one agrees that the Governor was grossly to blame, and that the trouble had been allowed to spread under his rule from its original place in the south of the province to the north of the Yellow River. Finally, in the early part of this year, intelligence was received that the energetic general Yüan Shī-k'ai (who had distinguished himself as a mere junior officer in 1884 by "standing up" to the Japanese in Corea) had been appointed Governor of Shan Tung, and was taking part of his German-trained troops with him from Siao-chan, near Tientsin. Great things were hoped from Yüan Shī-k'ai ; but it soon appeared that there were hampering forces at work in the background. Meanwhile occurred the murder at Feich'êng, south of the provincial capital, of the Rev. Mr. Brooks, and the story of the "Boxers'" doings from that moment can be gathered from Parliamentary Paper No. 3, just published by the Foreign Office ; so that there is no necessity for me to repeat the account therein clearly given by our courageous and able minister, Sir Claude Macdonald.

It may be worth while, however, to go back a moment and inquire into the origin of the word "Boxers," which word, though an incomplete rendering, is, after all, a fairly correct psychological translation of the words *I-ho K'üan* or "Patriotic Peace Fists." In a letter to the *Times* of the 25th of June last,\* I showed that in the year 1728 a previous Emperor had already described and condemned the blackmailing propensities of the dangerous and disloyal *K'üan*, or "fisticuff" fraternity. During the reign of that Emperor's grandson, at just about the time when Lord Amherst visited China, the same society men, under exactly the same name, again gave trouble. I published a short account of their doings in 1888 (*China Review*, page 11) ; but the name of "Boxer" did not appear in it, as that was only one of their many appellations. They were also called "Heavenly Order," and "Eight Diagram" people. The General who then quelled the revolt, which rapidly spread over exactly the same territory as the

\* *i.e.* 1900.



present rebellion, was a man (a Mongol, I think) named Nayench'êng, and in his report to the alarmed Emperor, dated 1816, he actually uses the words *I-ho K'üan*, and describes their incantations, their boasted immunity from cannon-shots, etc. Moreover, the titles of "Great Instructor Brother" and "Second Instructor Brother," which Nayench'êng says were then arrogated to themselves by the "Boxer" chiefs, are precisely those used now; for on the 5th of June last, when the Empress-Dowager saw the first conflagrations at Ma-kia P'u (south of the Peking walls) from her I-ho Park, she was informed that the "Second Instructor Brother" was the chief. When the *I-ho K'üan Hwei*, or "Boxers' Society," first started last year, it was pointed out to them, by those who secretly wished for their success against the missionaries, that by the statutes of the dynasty the term *Hwei*, or "Society," was illegal; but it was suggested to them that, as the Empress had ordered the *t'wan*, or *posse comitatus*, to be levied *en masse*, they might call themselves *I-ho t'wan*, or "Patriotic Peace Militia," thus securing an official status. Whether it was the villainous Yühien who suggested this artifice; and whether, as stated by Sir Claude Macdonald to the Yamên, the governor himself accepted the presidency of the society, I cannot say. There is nothing at all historically improbable in the suggestion; for an Emperor of China in the full heyday of his power once accepted from the Turks the title of "Khan," in order to please them, and to encourage their loyalty; and we ourselves all know what King Richard II. did when the British "Boxer," Wat Tyler, proved too much for his ministers. Moreover, by juggling with the words *t'wan* and *hwei*, it would be easy to make them, like Mark Twain's Confucian rule, "work both ways." What is perfectly certain, and what has been asserted by the Tsung-li Yamên, by the Viceroy, Liu K'un-yih, and by the missionaries alike, is that the resuscitated "Boxers" of to-day are simply the Great Sword Society of 1896-98, with accessions of riff-raff gathered as the ball rolls, masquerading under an apparently new but really old historical name. It is also a fact, frequently repeated by high Chinese officials, that the Great Sword Society itself is only an offshoot of the ancient "White Lily Society" of dreaded renown, which goes back



even to Kublai Khan's time. Unfortunately, at Peking the "literary breeze" (as the Chinese say) "blows very poorly," and all recollection of what had taken place in the days of the Emperor's great-grandfather had apparently disappeared from men's minds, even if those minds ever knew anything of the past. It was only about the 15th of June, when the literary and learned Viceroy Chang Chī-t'ung telegraphed to the well-disposed Manchu Prince P'uliang, and exhorted him to use his best influence to make the Empress-Dowager understand the truth, that it appears to have dawned upon her royal mind that the whole "Boxer" business was an imposture. Chang Chī-tung telegraphed in these words: "Ministers of the Blood and officers of spirit ought really to urge that the fisticuff bandits are anarchists, and not patriots at all. Their power cannot in any case for one instant stand against that of the foreign countries. Beg at once that a decree may issue for their thorough extermination. The matter is of supreme political import. The more Imperial clansmen and Manchu gentlemen of any kind you can get to join you, the better. Mr. X. [unnamed in the published copy] is the most loyal and fearless; please consult with him personally, and do not persist in any preconceived ideas. If you delay it will be too late." Another important telegram from Chang to "a certain minister" (*Siang-kwoh*, and therefore, probably, Junglu), runs: "The fisticuff bandits' anarchical movements are now right upon the metropolis, and I am afraid the Sacred Car (*i.e.* their Majesties) will be alarmed. If you don't exterminate the fisticuff bandits, you will not be able to stop the foreign soldiers. If you don't impeach Kangi,\* you won't be able to exterminate the fisticuff bandits. I beg you, sir, to quickly submit this view."

From the above, it will clearly be seen that the unfortunate Empress-Dowager, who after all is but an ignorant woman trained within the narrow precincts of four walls, was deceived by the silly superstition about invulnerability, and really thought for a time that the "Boxers" were a sort of multiplied Joan of Arc on a large male scale, who were going to *chasser les Anglais*, and all the rest of the foreign brood, out of China. This of course is no adequate defence of the

\* Perished during the "flight" to Si-an Fu.

Empress ; but the provocation China has received, together with the hopes instilled into the Empress's mind that she now really had a good chance of avenging her husband Yichu (the Emperor Hien-fêng), and the dynasty, ought to serve as mitigating circumstances in a judicially disposed mind. Her desire to annihilate her European enemies is no worse than the German Emperor's desire to annihilate his Chinese foes. As to the charges brought against her by Mrs. Grundy, there is no evidence, beyond tittle-tattle ; she is, anyhow, a woman of pluck ; and if she can make life less monotonous in her enforced seclusion by "carrying on" with the eunuchs, why should we be more severe with her than with a man ? Who is going to throw the first stone ? In any case, it is not our business.

However, let us leave morals alone, and see who are the persons chiefly responsible for misleading her. There is no doubt about Kangi and Yühien. According to the native reports (which I have usually found trustworthy), Sü T'ung, observing that the Empress-Dowager was wavering, flung himself on his knees and urged that, as the Boxers' flags bore the inscription, "Support Ts'ing (*i.e.* the Manchu Dynasty) and annihilate the Foreigner," it was evident they were real patriots, "and therefore" (the correspondent goes on) "Her Majesty fell into error." According to Sir Claude Macdonald's despatch to Lord Salisbury on January 31st last, Sü T'ung is a Chinese "bannerman" (*i.e.* a Chinaman assimilated politically to a Manchu), and an obstructive hater of foreigners and progress. He therefore makes a third in the number of those who will be "wanted" at Peking. Prince Twan (Tsai-i), of course, is another. His hostility is probably connected with disappointed ambition. His father, Yitsung, next brother to the Emperor Hien-fêng, was given in adoption to the then just deceased Prince Tun in the year 1845 ; but he soon fell into disgrace, and was not given the rank of *ts'in-wang*, or "prince of the first class" (*i.e.* of Tun) until 1860. When in 1861 the Emperor died, leaving a son, of course Prince Tun had no claim to the Imperial succession ; but when the Emperor T'ung-chi died in 1874, Prince Tun's son would, if Prince Tun had not been given away in adoption, have had better pretensions than the sons of the next brothers, Prince

Kung (Yihin) and Prince Ch'un (Yihwan). As a matter of fact, the present Emperor is the son of the seventh brother, Prince Ch'un, and Prince Twan is the son of the fifth brother, Prince Tun. As he belongs to the category *Tsai*, he can succeed "spiritually" if elected ; but no one of the category *Yi* can "go back" on a junior generation. The proper course is to go down to the next category *P'u*. Thus it is extremely probable that dynastic squabbles have complicated the "Boxer" question, which, taken by itself, might easily have been patched up. The *ta-ako*, or heir-apparent, is P'utsün, son of Tsai-i, and the principedom of Kung is inherited (I suppose because the sons were dead) by Prince Kung's grandson P'uwei. I don't know whose son P'uliang is ; but, anyway, he is in the running, for there is no Manchu rule about primogeniture : the only rule is "next in the next generation if eligible by character, eligibility to be decided by the predecessor or his representatives." Besides the above four "great criminals," there are two members of the Tsung-li Yamên who are named by the native correspondents as being rabid : one is Ch'ungyi, stated by Sir Claude Macdonald (Document No. 28) to be of "conservative tendencies," and the other is K'ihü, who, to judge by his name "category," must (like Yühien also) belong to a very junior generation, thrice removed, of the Imperial family. It is quite possible for a grand-nephew to be older than his grand-uncle. Two other new members of Prince Twan's new Yamên are Nat'ung and P'uhing, who are, under Twan, also "wing" commanders of the "Tiger Genii" or *Hu-shên* force. Nat'ung is, perhaps, Sir Claude's "Mongol named Na" (No. 28).

Now, so soon as this precious crew were known to be in power, the sensible Viceroy Liu K'un-yih, issued a very good proclamation, explaining the imposture of the invulnerability claim, and pointing out that the Boxers "fell the moment they were shot at" by General Nieh. The much-abused Li Ping-hêng and the Governor (recently acting Viceroy), Luh Ch'wan-lin, all telegraphed together to say that the Boxers ought to be exterminated at once. The Boxers took Ting-hing (Luh's native place) on the 20th of June, and it is said the unhappy Governor, fearing this, hurriedly abandoned his reviewing duties on the 17th of June, and hastened back to

Soochow, only to hear a rumour that some of his own family had been massacred. Meanwhile, K'ihü and Kangi are reported to have advised the Empress-Dowager to go off to Si-an Fu with the Emperor, leaving behind the *ta-ako*, with his father as Regent, to "lord" the administration. Yüan Shī-k'ai was ordered to march his men to Peking; but later he was told, in view of possible danger at Kiao Chou, to send a trusty lieutenant instead. The Governors Yü Yin-lin, of Hu Peh, Yü Lien-san, of Hu Nan, Wang Chi-ch'un, of An Hwei, and Sungshou (a Manchu), of Kiang Si, are stated to have joined the two great Viceroys and Li Ping-hêng in the anti-Boxer telegram.

In closing this short account of the origin of the "Boxer" rebellion, I will just state who all these better-disposed persons are.

1. A portrait and an account of Liu K'un-yih are published in *Black and White*, autumn of 1898; I forget what date;\* the portrait was given to me by Liu himself. He is a fine specimen of a really honest-minded Chinaman.

2. Chang Chī-tung made his reputation in 1879, when he impeached Ch'unghou for the "cowardly surrender" of Livadia. He is a much more learned man than Liu K'un-yih; but he is fiery, and not so safe and long-headed. I do not know him personally.

3. Luh Ch'wan-lin made his reputation in 1879, by squaring manfully up to Her Majesty's Consul at Pakhoi; at that time any man was a hero who could say more than "Bo to a goose" (or a consul). Liu Kun-yih, then Viceroy at Canton, at once made him Prefect of Canton, where I met him: he was shortly afterwards promoted to the Swatow *taotaiship*; and then, in rapid succession, to the Treasury of Sz Ch'wan, Governorship of Ho Nan, Viceroyalty of Sz Ch'wan, etc., where he fell into disgrace, owing to his excessive zeal in Tibetan matters; his last post was Governor at Canton. Luh is *par excellence* a literary man; almost as tall as Li Hung-chang; very pale and "blinky" about the eyes. He is no particular friend of foreigners; but he is no fool, and not rabid.

\* Another portrait appears in *John Chinaman*, John Murray, 1901. He died in 1902.



4. Yü Yin-lin is described at length in a letter to the *Times* of the 6th of September, 1898.

5. Wang Chī-ch'un was once in Russia, and was first chosen for the Czar's coronation ; but Li Hung-chang was asked for instead.

6. Sungshou is a Manchu of the True White Banner : he was, under Liu K'un-yih, Treasurer at Nanking before promotion to Kiang Si.

7. Yü Lien-san was formerly Treasurer of Shan Si, and then of Hu Nan. I do not know anything personally of these last four.

So far as it is possible to judge from what has taken place, every one has been taken by surprise by the recent outburst. My esteemed former colleague, Mr. G. J. Jamieson, it is true, wrote to the *Times* to call attention to a remarkable prophecy made a month before the outbreak by a correspondent of the *North China Daily News* ; but the same correspondent had been spinning interesting yarns for a long time ; and the best proof that the editor did not think much of it is that for a whole month after this prophecy he made no further serious allusion to the matter : it was a mere *ex post facto* newspaper triumph. Moreover, if the Peking correspondent had any real evidence of danger, it was surely his duty to tell Sir Claude Macdonald, who cannot be expected to notice irresponsible newspaper alarms. It is quite certain that the Russians and Japanese were taken aback. In a paper entitled "The German Sphere of Influence in China," published in the *New Century Review* last year (I forget the date),\* it was distinctly suggested that the seizure of Kiao Chou "was at once recognized by many to be the death-blow to Chinese independence, and the Empire is now almost inevitably doomed to a gradual dissolution."

In cases of great national crises, the Chinese unfortunately have no guiding star of principle ; besides, there is no loyalty in the public service. From the Emperor downwards nearly everybody is ready to sacrifice any one else, including his family and ancestors, to save his own skin. If it ever occurs in European services that a high official goes behind his subordinate's back, officially makes false accusations against

\* Reprinted in this volume.

him, or sacrifices his honour to get out of a foolish situation himself, such an event is rare, and in any case is more likely to be owing to vanity and weakness than to downright meanness of mind ; but, unfortunately, even the best of Manchu emperors have been prone to sacrifice their viceroys and governors ; and these in turn, as may be seen any day from the *Peking Gazette*, are only too ready to turn round and rend each other. As for mere subordinates, false accusations and backhanded private letters are the rule rather than the exception ; and generally nothing is more certain, when an inquiry takes place, than that the high official will get off scot-free, and one of his juniors be made a scapegoat. Hence it comes that when serious danger arises, the mandarin, even if he wishes to act rightly, is between the devil and the deep sea : if, like Nieh Shī-ch'êng, who attacked the "Boxers," he at once acts upon the spirit of his orders boldly and loyally, he is liable to be disowned and punished (Nieh Shī-ch'êng's army nearly mutinied through sympathy with him on this ground) ; if the people or revolvers go too far, he gets punished "for not foreseeing" or "for failing to act." I have been in several big Chinese "rows," and witnessed this wretched state of affairs myself. The invariable course adopted is to "let it (whatever it is) burn itself out." In my opinion, though there may be malicious villains or fools like Yühien and Kangi, at the bottom of this terrible business, the majority of those in power, such as the Dowager-Empress, Junglu, the two unhappy men who have been executed, and even the wily Li Hung-chang, have been partly taken by surprise, and in part have given way to the usual Chinese hen-brained panic. A Chinese crowd kills as much out of sheer panic as out of savagery. If we could only get at Prince Twan in the flesh, and talk to him in a quiet and sympathetic way, we might even yet scotch the monster without great bloodshed. Li Ping-hêng is fighting against us now, certainly. What loyal Chinaman would not, if he felt he had no alternative ? But he seems to have advised the crushing of the "Boxers" with the rest, and moreover, as he knows himself to be tabooed as an enemy, the wretched man has no chance (such as men in office like the two Viceroys have) of showing that he means no harm unless attacked. A good deal may result from the influence



of Sir Walter Hillier, who has gone out as adviser to the naval and military folk ; he is well known to most of the mandarins, and may possibly succeed in devising with them a means of holding China together.

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### CHAPTER III

#### THE "BOXER" IMBROGLIO OF 1900

"Although man is the essence of treachery, I believe every man wishes to be honest ; his interests prevent him."—GENERAL GORDON.

IF it were possible for nations, or rulers as the representatives and embodiments of nations, to swallow their pride, resentment, and ambition, acting solely according to what the natural instinct of all men secretly feels to be honourable and right, there could scarcely be a shadow of doubt in any one's mind that we ought one and all of us to pack up our traps and clear out of Kiao Chou, Port Arthur, Talien Wan, Wei-hai Wei, and Kwang-chou Wan, leaving the hoary old Empire of China one more chance of regaining its dignity, and giving it every reasonable assistance towards mending its mistaken ways. The whole leasehold or "sphere" business is, as the lawyers say, vitiated by a savour of initial fraud, and it is this sense of elementary justice denied to it by powerful foes that has nerved up the venerable old carcass to run amuck, and make one desperate final bid for unfettered and independent existence in the shocking way we now see.

The whole history of European relations with China has, like most other human histories, been one of faults on both sides. Exactly three centuries ago the earliest missionaries from the West were fairly well received by the decrepit Court of Peking, notwithstanding the violent filibustering of the first European merchant traders on the Chinese coasts, coupled with the ravages of Japanese pirates ; which two phenomena were of themselves sufficient to create suspicion

and alarm. Still, even a eunuch-ridden and corrupt court, such as that of the last Ming Emperors, was sufficiently reasonable to see that the pretentious dogma of Western religion might, after all, have some solid substratum of human good in it, whilst Western arts and sciences undoubtedly proved themselves to be of value. And so James Rho and Adam Schall ultimately received Imperial civilities and substantial employment at the Chinese Court. A "Boxer" rebellion ushered in the fresh and lusty Manchus, just as another such is, after an interval of 260 years, now ushering their degenerate descendants out. Yet the first two Tartar Emperors were exceedingly well disposed towards religion ; and if Jesuits, Franciscans, and Dominicans had not incontinently taken to squabbling together about trifles of empty dogma, dragging in the personalities of the Pope and the Emperor to make matters worse politically, both the Christian religion and European progress generally would have had a promising outlook all over China. But persecution cut the Gordian knot. Then followed nearly two centuries of practical confinement to Peking, Macao, and Canton. The Dutch had been ignominiously turned out of Formosa, and had brought both themselves and their religion into contempt all over the Far East by accepting the basest of apostate conditions in the miserable patch of land called Decima, in Nagasaki Bay. The Portuguese had obtained, through the connivance of corrupt mandarins, a not very creditable footing in Macao, where they were partly endured by the weakness, and partly tolerated as a necessary evil by the venality and corruptness, of the Canton Government. The bloodthirsty massacres of Chinese by the Spaniards in Manila make up the tale of Celestial wrongs and just suspicions ; or, if we prefer to take the European point of view, of Chinese treachery and its well-merited castigation. However, it was a fair exchange of give and take on both sides. Manchu officials and Chinese traders were suspicious and corrupt. Spaniards, Portuguese, Dutchmen, and at last Englishmen, were greedy, rude, and violent. The situation, if unsatisfactory, was as good as either party deserved. Trade dragged on its corrupt course at Canton ; and, figuratively and literally, no bones to speak of were broken on

either side. Meanwhile the population of China had shot up in two centuries from 60,000,000 to 400,000,000, and the total revenue collected from this huge mass of humanity amounted to about one shilling per annum per head, speculation included ; so that, whatever the faults of the ancient and exclusive civilization really were, things could not have been so very bad, even though the people were totally deprived of the consolations of Christianity we were so anxious to thrust upon them.

The next turning-point was the "Opium War." Many object to this cant term, as connoting a responsibility of ours which, they say, did not actually exist. It is unnecessary to press this point, for the Chinese themselves give a very fair account of it all, avoiding the straining of traders and of missionaries alike. They say opium had for a very long time been imported as a drug, and that the habit of smoking it, and consequently of importing it in ever-increasing quantities, grew to alarming dimensions before any responsible persons became aware of it, or, at all events, realized its importance. Moreover, they admit that, even after the evil influences of wholesale opium-smoking were discovered and realized, they themselves were largely to blame for the supineness, connivance, and corruption of their officers. There is nothing much to be proud of in our importing opium into China for the benefit of our Indian revenue ; but, on the other hand, it was a perfectly natural thing to do from a mercantile and political point of view, and therefore the Exeter Hall outcry about our lasting shame is quite unjustified. Moreover, at this time the extensive use of opium in Turkey, India, and elsewhere had exhibited no particularly evil effects ; and even if adventurous traders could be expected to go into heart-searching questions of commercial morality, they could have had no reason to suppose that the Chinese temperament would be so utterly exceptional as to lend itself to an undue indulgence unparalleled in the rest of mankind. The Chinese even go further. They perfectly well know, and they officially admit, that Commissioner Lin's want of tact and fairness was greatly responsible for the failure of the great opium destruction movement in 1835, when 20,000 chests were surrendered and destroyed. The

British Government had practically given way, when they found that the Chinese reformers were in earnest. Captain Elliott had surrendered every package of opium he could lay his hands on, and it only wanted a little generosity, tact, and patience on the part of Commissioner Lin to put a stop by degrees to future importations from India altogether. However, misunderstandings and conceit led to war; and after the cession of Hong Kong, the Chinese were so frightened at having to pay six millions of dollars for the opium destroyed, that they neglected to make any restrictive stipulations about the opium traffic. On our side, having "got our backs up," we rather shabbily took advantage of Chinese stupidity to legalize the trade—at least, in this negative way, that it went on unchecked by us, as before. To counterbalance this, China has since taken to growing opium, and the combined result has undoubtedly been to sap the Empire's strength.

The shiftiness of the Chinese in carrying out the various provisions of the Nanking Treaty generally, and the particular difficulty about our getting entry into Canton, were, of course, unsatisfactory. I am far from denying grave Chinese faults; but, on the other hand, I try to test the claims to virtue of our own, and to state a fair case for China. We all know that the Chinese are shift, and often untruthful too; they are by no means alone amongst nations in these respects. But the Nanking Treaty was forced upon them, and we have plenty of instances in European politics of Western nations shuffling, not only out of compulsory treaties, but out of treaties made in good faith and voluntarily. Moreover, our own European ways, even if tactful, were often misunderstood by, and offensive to, the Chinese; and it is quite certain that they thought us all then,—as they feel they have reason to think us all now,—shift, violent, and greedy. The final result of these smouldering feelings on both sides burst out into flame in the shape of the second war, in which the French found a specific reason for taking part as allies owing to the cowardly murder of their missionary Chappedelaine, following, as it did, upon a long series of persecutions. The Americans and the Russians took the opportunity to press their own claims amid the clash of our arms. The results to the Manchus were even

more humiliating than those of the first war, and therefore no one can be surprised that the Chinese as a nation do not love us in consequence. The English and the French they have to thank for driving the Emperor out of his capital and burning the Summer Palace; the Russians for having, in 1855, summarily annexed the lower Amur; for having, in 1858, secured by treaty the left bank up to the Ussuri; and for having, in 1860, secured by a second treaty the parts between the Ussuri and the sea. The Americans were able to appear in a more friendly capacity; but the Chinese regarded their motives as jealous and self-interested, none the less. Treaties with nearly all the Powers now followed, and General Gordon lent his services towards propping up the Manchu throne, though it is well known that he later on considered China's best hopes to lie in the extinction of that dynasty.

And so things went on. The first rat to leave the sinking ship was Siam, which discontinued sending tribute. The French put Saïgon in their pockets as they sailed home; but although the legal owner, Annam, was a vassal of China, Saïgon was a province too far south to matter much for the moment. In 1865 Bhutan was placed under our official ken; but in this case, too, China had the Nepaul precedent, and did not mind much so long as the two Himalayan states were not occupied by our troops. The next thing was the temporary occupation of Ili by Russia in 1871, after the Chinese had been expelled from Kashgar in 1863, and Yakub Beg's power had gradually become threatening to his neighbours. In 1874 disputes with the Japanese touching shipwrecked seamen led to the temporary occupation by the latter of Formosa, whence they were coaxed out chiefly by the good offices of Sir Thomas Wade. The same year the Loochoo Islands were summarily placed under the Japanese Home Office, though for many centuries they had sent regular tribute to China, and had kept up relations with Foochow. By the treaty of 1874, Annam opened Tonquin to French trade, and the Chinese now found to their horror that they had the French knocking at their very gates. In 1880, after first beguiling the Manchu envoy Ch'unghou into surrendering Ili, Russia thought better of it in view of the threatening



attitude of progressive China, and ultimately gave back that province in consideration of expenses paid. It has been said that this action was inspired by fear, which is very possible; but, none the less, Russia is fairly entitled to the credit of an honest fulfilment of her promise, no matter what her motives may have been, which there is no title in others to question. The French now began to push their way up to the Chinese frontiers in Yün Nan and Kwang Si. This gradually led to hostilities, French attacks upon Formosa and the Pescadores, the French disaster at Langson, and finally the arrangement of a "drawn" peace by Sir Robert Hart. Corea next slipped away, and China, instead of being her suzerain, condescendingly receiving exclusive homage, now found herself merely *primus inter pares*, intriguing for her rights at Söul in company with a miscellaneous assembly of foreign officials of all countries, whose diplomatic status was as vague as that of her own "resident." During these interludes Great Britain suddenly occupied Upper Burma, and claimed to trade with Tibet; compensating China, as pretended suzerain, with promises of a periodical Burmese "mission with presents," which never came off once, and never will come off. Little nibblings of territory by ourselves and the Russians in the Hunza and Aktash directions also caused a slight flutter of Chinese feathers; and in 1890 we obtained from China a protectorate over Sikkim. For three or four years after this poor China did pretty well, nothing more alarming taking place than a few British, French, Swedish, or Russian missions of inquiry into Manchuria and Tibet. But Jeshurun waxed fat, and kicked aggressively during this short respite: the result was the war with Japan, which severed Formosa and the Pescadores definitely from the Empire, made Corea independent, and very nearly cost China Liao-tung as well.

Thus, from the Tonquin frontier town of Monkai, on the Gulf on Tonquin, to the mouth of the Yalu, in Liao-tung, the whole of the fringe of subject territory bordering upon China proper has been lopped off piecemeal since, forty years ago, she agreed to make treaties with European Powers. No wonder the trunk begins to twinge when the extremities have all gone. Tonquin, French and British Shans, Burma,

Manipur, Bhutan, Sikkim (Nepaul as well as Assam already practically ours), Hunza, Wakhan, Badakshan, the Pamir, Kokand; then, at the other end of the Russian frontier, the Ussuri province; Corea, Loochoo, Formosa—all gone within one short generation—"all my pretty chickens and their dam at one fell swoop." The useless deserts of Tibet, Kashgaria, and Mongolia, together with the ancestral wastes of Manchuria, were all that was left of colonial dominion to the Manchu rulers of China after forty years of militant Christianity, with innumerable missionary "rows," and extravagant demands for compensation thrown in at intervals. No doubt the conduct of China has been bad, but it cannot be denied that European behaviour to her has not been calculated to inspire confidence in the Christian purity of our motives. In spite of her bad finance, she never borrowed a cent until we Europeans induced her to do so, and she has always been most scrupulous in paying us her debts. Not to speak of Turkey, how do the Christian States of Portugal, Greece, or the Argentine Republic compare with her for financial honour? In spite of her corruption, the population—even allowing 300 per cent. on the collected revenue for roguery and squeezes—has never paid 3s. a head in taxation, including local charges, against £3 a head in Western Europe, exclusive even of rates and octroi. Her traders are quite as honest as ours, and often more capable: the first statement is universally admitted; the second is self-evident. Her literature ranks among the first in the world, even though her educational system may be antiquated. If she has unhappily debauched and weakened herself by opium indulgence, she has not yet degraded her manhood below the level of the drunken idlers who infest all our own British towns, or below that of the masses of Russian peasantry; so that we Europeans live in glass houses in this respect. Chinamen have been the making of all the European colonies in the Eastern seas. If they are not welcome in America or Australia, it is not entirely on account of inherent faults of their own, but partly because white men cannot compete with them on equal terms. They were not only welcome, but eagerly sought for when they were indispensable; now they are kept out. No heat or cold, no conditions of atmosphere, come

amiss to a Chinaman ; he is quiet, industrious, patient, never gets drunk, makes an orderly husband. In a word, with all his vices and defects, the Chinaman is one of the finest all-round citizens in the world.

In thus stating a reasonable case for China, I by no means condone her faults collectively and individually ; and as for the Manchu Dynasty, I am not alone in the opinion that it has largely forfeited its right to exist. The fault most offensive to us is arrogance, and for that China paid dearly when Japan gave her the thrashing she so richly deserved. But at this stage three Great Powers appear upon the scene. Not one of these Powers had ever ventured to try a fall with Japan alone when she was in full bloom of strength ; but now that she was exhausted with the effort of crushing single-handed a presumptuous enemy for the common benefit of all Treaty Powers, they fell upon her in combination, and deprived her of the fruits of her victory, under pretext of there being danger to the world in a Japanese occupation of part of Liao-tung. The following are the exact Russian words, translated : "The cession of Liao-tung to Japan raised reasonable objections on the part of the European Powers. Taking up its position on the northern shores of the Yellow Sea, Japan would thus dominate the north-east of China, and so destroy the political balance of the Far East. By virtue of this, Russia, France, and Germany, upon the initiative of the Russian Government, advised Japan, in the interest of maintaining peace in the Far East, to withdraw from its claims to the peninsula of Liao-tung." Possibly Russia honestly took this view at the time, and if she had stood manfully up to Japan, and either argued or enforced her own case in courageous independence, no one could have disparaged her action. Even for France, as squire-in-ordinary to the Russian knight-errant, the plea of humble duty might be admitted. But in the case of Germany there was nothing in the way of local interest to account for this unexpected attendance upon Russia, hat in hand ; and no one saw through the move more clearly than China, who never even pretended to show gratitude for the gratuitous aid proffered. Of course, the negative policy of neutralizing the power of the Dual Alliance by getting indirect admittance into it as a *tertium*

*quid* was the next best thing to the difficult task of positively weakening it, even though this involved a temporary disclaimer of common interest with the Power which had nursed both Germany's navy and Germany's trade into being, in favour of the other two Powers who had always done everything they could to check it by severe tariffs. This deliberate sacrifice to "interest" may be in accordance with modern diplomacy, but it scarcely appeals to the now dormant sense of chivalry. As a matter of fact, it may be rather a good thing for Europe to draw off a little of Germany's electricity to the Far East; but that does not make the action any the more admirable.

That Russia should expect some *quid pro quo* was not unreasonable, for she had never come to serious blows with China since she was ejected from Albazin 200 years ago; and her territorial acquisitions, if sometimes of a rather doubtful kind, at least were ultimately conceded to her by treaty. Accordingly Russia obtained the permission of China to winter her fleet in the harbour of Kiao Chou, and also, in certain eventualities, to anchor in Port Arthur and Ta-lien Wan, which last two places, however, might not be alienated by China to any other Power. The Cassini Convention also arranged for railways through Manchuria under Russian auspices. France obtained as her reward, at the expense of Great Britain, certain concessions of territory in Kiang-hung. It is this foolish policy of mischievously trying to set one nation against the other that has cost China so dear. It is the "policy of the weak," as frankly enunciated by Li Hung-chang. In this particular instance, we were not heart-broken at the opportunity of making China pay a just penalty for the silly attempt, and we promptly exacted compensation to suit our convenience on the Burma frontier. Germany, *sur ces entrefaites*, got no thanks whatever from China, Russia, or France; all three, or, at least, two of the three, too lightly regarding her as a gratuitous intruder (or *to-shī*, as the Chinese say). If Russia ever felt any gratitude at all, she had now got all she wanted, and made no visible effort to exhibit it. All this was naturally calculated to irritate Germany, who had thus made an enemy of Japan without having anything in hand to show for it.



Certainly, from a pure bargainer's point of view, Germany was entitled to expect some reward; but the Chinese, with their usual slipperiness, evaded all attempts made by her officious friends to obtain a naval station. Germany's opportunity accordingly arose when, on November 1, 1897, two German missionaries were murdered in Shan Tung, and a colony was promptly baptized in the blood of the martyrs. The Russian right to take Kiao Chou on temporary lease had not yet been exercised, and the Cassini Convention said nothing about restricting the rights of other Powers there. Perhaps some involuntary remark which the German Emperor had adroitly caused the Czar to drop at the famous interview which anticipated M. Felix Faure left the German course technically clear. The Germans, according to their own published account, carefully eluded British watchfulness, chose the moment, and slipped into Kiao Chou unawares, taking forcible possession of the place in time of peace, and driving out the Chinese troops without further parley. Baron Heyking proved obdurate in the subsequent negotiations, and the Manchu Government, by not summoning courage to resist on this supreme occasion, sealed their own doom, possibly for ever. The next thing was the "temporary occupation" of Port Arthur and Ta-lien Wan\* by Russia, who no doubt could now plead: "The serpent tempted me, and I did eat," though that is an inadequate plea in the eyes of justice. The insolent stupidity of the Chinese Government, more especially in missionary matters, had meanwhile so alienated the sympathies of foreigners in China that, shocking though this singular disregard for those international conventions usually known as "international law" was universally felt to be, there was a general sentiment that it served China right, more especially as in yielding to Germany the mischievous Celestial statesmen clearly hoped to set foreign nations by the ears, and get Germany turned out. Russia, however, simply took her share. England and France promptly demanded compensation on the ground that: "If you are going to sit silent and let the adversaries play false cards at the international rubber, we demand the right to play two cards of any suit we like to make the game even." It may not have been a

\* Since by a pun called "Dalny" or "Distant."



generous thing to do ; but, at any rate, it was natural and human, and China brought it on herself by her own pusillanimous action. China, in short, for once overreached herself. This sort of thing had always paid well in bygone times, with ignorant Huns, Turks, Tibetans, and inferior frontier tribes generally ; but European nations, though spiteful and jealous of each other, were found to be of tougher material than Tartars ; and, moreover, they had the advantage of a more logical and scientific training, better means of exchanging views, and more financial "pull." Perhaps the greatest come-down of all for Manchu dignity was when Prince Henry exacted, on absolutely equal terms, personal and informal interviews with the Empress-Dowager and the Emperor.

Since then poor China has been going *à la derive*, and Christian diplomacy, "so sensitive in point of right," has been like a bee-hive without the queen, "all over the place," for want of a disinterested leader and a righteous man. Amidst the noisy talk of *kwa-fên*, or "slicing up like a melon," which succeeded Germany's stunning blow administered to the poor staggering gladiator just as he was recovering a little breath, China bridled up as haughtily as possible in silence, and set to work arming with a will ; now trying on the old foolish game of inciting the jealousy of one Power against the other ; now making a spasmodic resistance, as in the case of the Italian demands ; and now giving way in sheer desperation to a tremendous and ruinous demand such as that recently advanced by France : this demand is in favour of religious bodies she uses for political purposes in the Far East, but periodically chases away at home.\* In 1879-80 China had made an honest effort to get rid of this politico-religious incubus by arranging through Mr. Dunn for a nuncio or legate from the Pope ; she was prepared to give the utmost protection and toleration to Catholics and converts, provided that mere moral arguments were used with her, and that no force were applied ; and the Pope welcomed it, as any honest Christian would have done. But France promptly interposed, as "Protector of the Catholics" in the Far East, with her political veto, and practically threatened to overturn

\* She is now once more chasing them away.

the Pope's influence in France unless the Holy Fathers left hers alone in China. The Pope gave way, or his advisers did. The earliest use Germany made of her first Catholic mission in China, and of her successful assertion against French pretensions of her right to protect her own Catholics in the Far East, was in connection with Kiao Chou, when Bishop Anzer adopted the most militant of attitudes in advising the German Emperor. It seems to me an incongruous garb that modern religion is thus decking herself in, and one bearing a suspicious resemblance to the cloak of the Inquisition. Of course, the double-dealing of the Chinese themselves is largely responsible for this Borgian and Medician type of political Christianity; but, on the other hand, extra-territorialism and missionary zeal is innocently responsible for Chinese intrigue and treachery. What should we think if unkempt and bearded Russian "popes" in their gaberdines had the right to stand up preaching in broken English on a stand at Nelson's monument? Or if a couple of half-shaved, scowling Spanish priests accompanied as advocates to Sir F. Lushington's court a more or less innocent Cockney Catholic youth charged with breaking Protestant windows? Yet this is what goes on daily all over China. My humble views upon missionary propaganda in China are expressed at length in the *Dublin Review* for April, 1897.\* As that is a Catholic journal, and as I distinctly stated at the outset that I was a non-Catholic, and proceeded to criticize the Catholics, it is evident that the missionary case must be fairly stated therein, or the paper would not have been accepted. I will quote a sentence or two: "I could never see that either the ignorant or the educated Chinese cared much for dogma. As the French priests used to say, 'Ce sont de tristes Chrétiens.' . . . It is the medical missions which are the great success [everywhere]. . . . The French missionaries exact the utmost personal deference; no converts of any rank presume to sit down. . . . The Protestant missionaries do good in the following way: They teach poor children to be clean, speak the truth, and behave themselves modestly, chastely, and quietly. As to the adult male converts, I could never

\* Reprinted in this volume.

convince myself they were in earnest." The fact is, historically the really well-informed Chinese think they see clearly that Christianity is nothing more than the doctrine of Buddha carried to Syria by Hindoo priests, and modified to suit the ancient religion of the Jews; just as at the same moment other Buddhist emissaries softened the asperities of Shamanism, Taoism, or Confucianism, and carried the gentle doctrine of equality and mercy to China, Corea, Burma, and Japan. Moreover, when Nestorianism and Buddhism were both working together at Si-an Fu, the Chinese not unreasonably regarded them as different forms of the same religion; and, in fact, when I witnessed during a year's stay in Burma the simple, unpretending devotion of all ranks, the indifference to wealth, the enormous charity, the respectful gatherings of all sorts of people to hear sermons in the village temples or *kyaungs*, the decent simplicity and freedom of women, the equality of all "classes," etc., and compared it with the flaunting worldliness of our own fashionable churches, with their squires' pews, their stingy collections, the simpering of overdressed women, the shame to be seen kneeling, the squabbles about trumpery points in "doctrine" upon which Christ Himself never expressed any opinion, and the general snobbery of class distinctions, I often felt that there was more of the genuine spirit of Christianity in frank Buddhism than in our own sanctimonious, worldly sectarianism and pretence. Anyhow, the learned Chinese, rightly or wrongly, regard the whole missionary business as a historical fraud, and they have as much right to do so as we have to criticize their own solemn "idolatrous" farces (as they appear to us). They say: "At the time all this took place, Han Wu Ti had conquered half Asia; Chinese civilization and power were at their zenith; more than half Europe was still in a state of barbarism. Why should a petty nation called the Jews, who to this day are despised outcasts nearly all over the European world, have had all this tenderness lavished upon them by Heaven, with a reversion of benefits to the uncivilized hordes of Europe, whilst several hundred million Chinese were to be entirely left out in the cold for 2000 years?" When in addition to the Quixotic absurdity of the entire case (as it seems to them) from its historical and philosophical aspect,

they observe Russian Christians calling themselves Orthodox, having married priests, and not proselytizing at all; Catholic celibate priests getting up a political quarrel between the Emperor and the Pope, engaging converts to fight against the Emperor's armies, interfering in local affairs, carrying extra-territorial jurisdiction with them wherever they go, abusing Protestant missionaries; when they see Protestant missionaries split up into a dozen rival sects, almost entirely ignored and too often derided by the mercantile community; abusing the Catholics, living comfortably with their wives and families, mostly at the ports; neglecting to minister to drunken foreign sailors and others of their own kind, who manifestly require some sort of corrective discipline; when they see France and Italy playing a double game for and against religion according as it suits their purpose; America and Australia driving the Chinese from their shores; Germany taking up under her wing from political motives the exotic against which Bismarck was furiously tilting only twenty years ago; when they see all this, and couple it with the fate of India, of the fringe of States around China, of the blacks in Africa, of the Red Indians, of Honolulu, of Turkey, of Persia; when they reflect what they were themselves before they emasculated themselves with the opium habit, and when noble Emperors like K'anghi and K'ien-lung dictated their will to the whole world (as they measured it); can it be wondered that their gorge, and more especially the gorge of the ruling classes, now rises at the spectacle of so much one-sidedness, unfairness, and bullying? It is this that has caused the Dynasty, or a section of it, to go stark mad rather than tolerate any further an outrage against the most elementary principles of justice; and it is to this feeling also that we primarily owe a similar revolt of the mind amongst the ignorant masses, the whole culminating in the curious hesitating mixture known as the "Boxer" rebellion. Prince Twan and his indignant friends have first induced the Empress-Mother to depose a weakly monarch who (they thought) was selling their birthright; and then they have fraudulently attempted to strengthen their own case by leading Her Majesty to believe that the greedy foreigner was bent upon her destruction. This may be a wrong view to



take of Europe, and a hostile one, but it is no more outrageous than the distorted Boer view of the British, which excites so much sympathy over the rest of Europe; and if it is wrong, our own European conduct is perhaps to blame too. We have no right to whimper and talk about "treachery." The mandarins, if corrupt, are part of a system, the responsibility for which lies with their own Government, and not with us; they are naturally indignant at the loss of their accustomed livelihood, at the diversion of all available funds to foreign loans and to foreign armaments. The people, if hostile, are usually only so when encouraged or provoked; though they have their grievances, on the whole they are content with the easy *laissez-aller* character of their own administration. If it were not for the superior luxury of missionary life as compared with their own, for the extra-territoriality which lifts missionaries beyond equality with themselves before the law, for the mischievous intrigues caused by disputes between local converts and local pagans concerning popular customs, there would be little hostility between the people and the missionaries, who are almost invariably good and kindly persons. As to the Dynasty, it is unhappily degenerate, both morally and physically, besides being ill supplied with legal heirs. But is it to be wondered at, after the treatment it has received, and with the recollections of past glory behind it, that passion gets the better of reason, and a desperate plunge is taken with a resolve to encompass in its own ruin that of the Europeans who have ruined it? When a combination of Dutch and foreign intriguers set to work to turn us out of South Africa for their own benefit, we found plenty of *intellectuels* at home ready to join the jealous and hostile press of the Continent, and to attack us for defending our own liberties and rights. It was admitted that the Boer Government was corrupt and cruel; yet their conduct in driving to the sea the only nation in the world which grants equality to all men was proclaimed from the Continental housetops as heroism of the first water. The Manchu Government also has those faults of corruption and cruelty: but how is it that the Jameson Raid against Boer abuse of power was so odious to the nation which two years later made a virtue at Kiao Chou of a similar raid against



Chinese abuse of power? If so many of the Germans, the French, and the Russians think it a heroic act for misguided men to try and drive us out of South Africa, how is it they are so horrified when the misguided Manchus try to drive Europeans out of China? The fact is, the guiding principle of right in politics is obscured in modern times, and the eyes of Europeans see black or white in the same colour accordingly as it suits their interests or their resentment; nor can we decline to admit our British share in this moral *désorientation*.

The conduct of a section of the Chinese Government and people has undoubtedly been bad, but it is equally incontestable that the irritating, aggressive, and unfair attitude of European nations is largely responsible for such a lapse of reason; nor must it be forgotten that, in contemplation of so immoderate and exaggerated an outburst of passion at the capital, the greater part of both the governors and the governed in the provinces of China have remained quiescent and fair. It would be a lasting injustice, and an act of cowardice as well, to repay these good men for their abstention from evil in the time of our own stress by attacking them after their very abstention has enabled us to bring adequate forces to the front. It is only fair that the nation as a whole should be held responsible for wilful (liquidated) damage done; but it is not fair that the nation should be permanently crippled with exemplary damages, caused in part by our own contributory negligence. What the Chinese, who are the freest democracy in the world, dread even more than the missionaries is the grinding, inquisitorial, and unsparing administrative methods of nearly every European Power but England. We have a duty to perform to the Chinese people beyond the mere punishing of the Manchu Government. For all that is outrageous in the recent explosion of ferocity the Manchu Government is solely responsible to us, morally as well as actually; if the Chinese people had any part in it, it was only a limited section of the people in one limited region: apart from foreign contributory action in the shape of mistaken missionary zeal and seizure of territory, the wrongful action of that limited section of the people was first provoked by misery and starvation: such as

the original action was at the outset, it was as dangerous to the Dynasty as to the missionaries; but its effect was ingeniously diverted by rascally governors and misguided princely personages from the Dynasty to missionaries and to foreigners generally. It is a very serious question whether the Manchu Dynasty ought to be allowed to exist any longer; at any rate, if it is tolerated, it should only be in the person of the legitimate Emperor, duly elected in 1874; and the wasting of revenues upon an idle pack of useless banner-men should be at once put a stop to. These banner-men at Peking are partly responsible for the attacks on the legations, and the whole organization should be at once broken up, the men being either drafted into a new and homogeneous national army, or being left to gain their own living by labour,\* like common Chinamen. As to the banner-men in the provinces—Canton, Foochow, Hangchow, Nanking, Chinkiang, King-chou, Ch'êng-tu, Si-an Fu, Kwei-hwa Ch'êng, Ts'ing-chou, etc.—they are in a very peculiar position, inasmuch as they have taken no part whatever in the revolt against foreigners. Of course, if it is decided to keep on the Manchu Dynasty, they will remain as they are; but in that case those interested in setting upon her legs a strong China should see that they do proper military work for their money. Should the Manchu ruling house be displaced, these same banner-men can also be drafted into the national army like ordinary Chinamen.

If this expensive incubus of banner-men could only be got rid of, there is really no reason (not of the vindictive kind) why the Manchu Dynasty should be set aside. In the first place, it has been in the past the very best the Chinese ever had, in almost every way, and from every point of view. So far as it is foreign, it has lost its language, and practically become Chinese; so far as the Chinese are foreign to it, they have grown to love the "pigtail," and have practically become Manchu. The two elements should henceforth be welded into one homogeneous nation, the Manchus disappearing into the mass of Chinese just as the Scotch (as a power) have disappeared into the mass of English; the Manchu family continuing to reign, not by

\* Since authorized by Imperial decree, 1901.

reason of its power or nationality, but by virtue of its excellent antecedents and traditions—very much as the Stuarts (much worse kings than the Manchus) ceased to be Scotchmen, or the Hanoverians to be Germans, after a few generations on the British throne. The Chinese monarchy would thus be strengthened by the total abolition of fictitious and useless dividing lines and interests. With the exception of a limited family circle, well paid, well educated, and bred carefully up simply to produce heirs, the whole of the Imperial loafers known as agnates, clansmen, *ghioro*, and so on, should be drafted into the mandarin classes as ordinary unprivileged officials. The eight “iron-capped princes,” or *Fürsts*, who occupy an intermediate position between the Imperial princes and nobles like Confucius and Mencius, and who correspond somewhat to persons like the King of Hanover or the Duke of Hesse-Nassau in the German system, might be left their rank as counsellors, and also their estates, so long as they cease to be pensioners on the public chest: in fact, no vested property rights or empty titles should be interfered with at all, provided that no charges or privileges are foisted upon the public economy. The whole Chinese civil service should be at once re-organized—so far, at least, as salary goes. After all, the number of indispensable officials is very limited. Including the 1300 *hien*-city magistrates, who are the true essence of government, and the prefects, intendants, judges, treasurers, governors, and viceroys above them, there are not 2000 “commissioned” civil officers in the whole empire, and these would be well paid with £2,000,000 a year. To provide this first charge, an increase upon import duties should be consented to, and steps should be taken to totally abolish *likin* and native Custom-houses.\* The one innovation should not be granted without the other. It must be remembered that as much purely native or coast trade passes through Sir Robert Hart’s hands as foreign trade; not only should the taxation upon this (imports and exports) be remodelled, but all native junk trade (upon the coast and main river routes only) should be gradually placed under the Foreign Customs. The Chinese Government should, in the first

\* Now done, and both items largely placed under Sir R. Hart.

instance, be left to select its own officials in the old way, but steps should be taken without loss of time to improve the system of selection in friendly consultation with the Emperor's Government, which should be strengthened and respected in every possible way, and spared all ridicule or loss of "face." Provision of some sort would have to be made during a number of years for the hordes of hungry expectants, five of whom probably exist for each of the 2000 available commissions, *i.e.* 10,000 in all. This would be one of the most difficult matters; but openings would undoubtedly be found by degrees in the reformed administrations; in any case, their rights are vested, and under no circumstances ought a large educated class, possessing legal expectations, to be cast penniless and discontented upon an empire in process of reorganization. The achievements of Lord Cromer in Egypt prove that all this is well within the possible capacity of a man like Sir Robert Hart, who is by far the most faithful, self-effacing, and industrious foreign servant the Manchus ever had; and if he is willing at the age of sixty-five\* to remain in harness, it is quite certain that he would be a most *grata persona*. The next best man in the Far East is Mr. J. McLeavy Brown. As to the army and navy, recent events prove that effective reorganization could rapidly proceed upon beaten lines, and that the Chinese possess admirable raw material.

If Great Britain alone were concerned, there would be no difficulty in turning out a regenerated "China for the Chinese" in one single generation, just as has been done in the case of Egypt or Burma. Under the British flag all men are equal before the law, and all white men have equal social privileges besides,—the term "white man" now including by extension "Japanese"; but, unfortunately, the broad and generous principles which have made such a success out of British colonial administration are not shared by France, Germany, or Russia; and consequently, whilst Great Britain would be quite content to utilize French, Russian, or German administrators, working on British principles of equity or equality, it is almost certain that the officers of those Powers, if trusted with control, would act

\* Now sixty-eight.



on the principle of privilege for themselves : they have not got genuine freedom in their blood. Certainly, Germany has made some show of governing Kiao Chou upon liberal British principles, but there is no guarantee that this policy is more than a temporary makeshift in order to gain a specific end. Even if Russia were theoretically disposed to adopt a liberal attitude, and to throw her country—or, at all events, her “sphere”—frankly open to the world’s competition, it is doubtful if she practically could or durst do so. The whole Russian system rests upon the ignorance and subjection of the masses. As a Russian minister once said with warmth to me : “We are distinctly of opinion that the English system of liberty for the masses is a stupid mistake. The masses are unfit in all countries, and especially in Russia, to judge what is best for themselves ; and it is for the small body of educated and trained men, who make a business of ruling, to decide this matter for them.” Were the ruling Russians to admit Americans and Englishmen to Port Arthur and Vladivostock as we admit Russians to Hong Kong, the more ignorant of the Russians would naturally expect equal rights and freedom for themselves. In short, Russia is bound for ever by her own principles either to keep her people in subjection and ignorance or to abandon her autocratic system. No educated nation will tolerate the “autocracy” of a mere *camarilla*. As to France, she is as splendid in science as she is hopeless in commerce. Not a single French possession of importance in the whole world can be said to pay its way satisfactorily. It is like a gay old beau keeping up a big harem to vindicate his decaying virility. In every case it is “exclusive privileges for the French ;” and if the French cannot succeed themselves on those terms, “then no one else shall succeed under our flag.” The United States are equally anxious with ourselves to obtain the open door for their own benefit when they are outside, but they are far from equally ready with ourselves to extend the benefits of an open door to others when they themselves are the keepers. Japan has proved herself up to the hilt worthy of our respect and our confidence : in courtesy and chivalry, in military capacity, statesmanship, and personal bravery, Japan is fully the equal of any Continental nation.



Though the Japanese stature is small, and the skin yellow, the stuff within is as worthy of our friendship and alliance\* as any French, German, or Russian material, and Japan has fully earned her right to have a leading vote in the question. Her bravery has saved her from the Asiatic ruin. Unfortunately, Japan's commercial principles are not so sound or trustworthy as those of her political administration; but she is a nation with such immense pluck and capacity for introspective reform, that it is quite possible she may mend her ways and become more liberal even in that respect; perhaps the present want of liberality is partly owing to incomplete confidence in her own strength to deal judicially with all foreign rights under the powers given her by recent treaties. She has not yet the full courage of her equality and independence. However that may all be, in arranging a future for China, we must calculate with the opposing interests of at least five great Powers—Germany, America, Japan, Russia, and France—all of whom are now contemninous with China; and it would certainly be a great triumph for Christian diplomacy if the six Powers chiefly concerned could settle between themselves and China some fair scheme which should secure at once lasting peace and independence for China coupled with an equality of right for themselves.

If Chinese laws and the administration of them were at all tolerable, or even possible, it would assuredly be a desirable thing to get rid at once of extra-territoriality, which saps the vitality of any nation to which it is applied. This was the great bugbear of shame to the Japanese, who fought long and fiercely for its abolition. How is it possible for a Government in whose face any stranger can shake his fist to stand with dignity before its own people? Picture the result to ourselves if all the German waiters, Italian organ-grinders, and French cooks in London were taken gingerly by policemen before their own consuls whenever found offending against London by-laws. And imagine the further effect if Swedenborgians, Oneida Free Lovers, Mormons, Skoptsis, and Shakers had their agents getting up Salvation Army brawls with the colliers of Wigan, the crofters of Scotland,

\* She has since become our ally.

and the peasantry of Connaught on petty subjects of "doctrine" every day. Certainly, it is the fault of the Chinese that their judicial procedure is so barbarous that concessions such as Europe has made to Japan are at present impossible; yet it must be remembered that thirty years ago it would have seemed as absurd to grant "home justice" even to Japan. But if we must administer the law upon our own subjects in China, at least we ought to take care that they do not press their privileges beyond the limit of reason. Missionaries may fairly have secured to them the right to insist upon entry into towns where there is manifestly bad faith in the attempt to keep them out; but they ought to be subjected to local by-laws and customs like any one else, and it should not be tolerated that they take any native under their protection. Better have a foreign judge to administer Chinese law for China than have appeals to foreign courts. It is, however, a hopeless, endless circle as things now stand. The authorities will always show bad faith so long as it is thought to be against the public interest for missionaries to be in their localities; and missionaries will always be querulous and aggressive so long as they see a dishonest attempt is being made to curtail their freedom of action. The only correct attitude is that adopted by the Orthodox Church, which tolerates no internal interference, and admits any convert, but makes no attempts whatever at conversion or proselytism.\* So long as Catholics prowled about in secret, and secured the faithful at the risk of life and torture, there was at least something elevating in the idea of a teacher's courage or a convert's firm belief in face of such dangers. But now, although the medical missions do splendid work, and one or two of the purely proselytizing missions have many members who patiently live hard and uncomfortable lives amidst hostile and ungrateful populations, it may be truthfully said of the body of missionaries—fully admitting the good intentions of all—that as Catholics, even if earnest, they are often involuntary mischief-makers, whilst some Protestants, even if earnest, are unwittingly injudicious. In both cases the native article produced by their efforts is too often void of sincerity or reality, and no one is less able than a missionary to discern

\* Russia has since shown signs of pushing Orthodoxy.

it. In any case, the cost of making this hybrid article is totally disproportionate to the risk and expense incurred. In 1898 there were fifty-four Protestant missions established in the eighteen Chinese and three Manchurian provinces, each mission having from one to twenty or more stations. Thus, taking all Catholics—Franciscans, Jesuits, Dominicans, Friars Minor, Missions Etrangères, etc.—as one, there were fifty-five religions for the distracted Chinese to choose from, Swedish, Canadian, Scotch, English, German, Norwegian, Dutch, American, Danish, and “Zenana ;” six kinds of Baptist ; five kinds of Methodist ; eight kinds of Presbyterian, Friends, Disciples, Lutherans, Brethren ; and so on. The China Inland had missions in sixteen out of eighteen provinces, no other equalling it by half. In or about the same year the Jesuits alone had 250 foreign priests in the two Kiang Nan provinces, and 112,000 native Christians, against 52 priests and 60,000 Christians fifty years ago. The Jesuits also have a mission of 30,000 Christians in South Chih Li. Then there are the Missions Etrangères, with about 150,000 Christians, in the four provinces of South-West China, in Tibet, and in Manchuria ; the Lazarists in Chêh Kiang, North-West Chih Li, and Kiang Si ; the Franciscans in Shen Si, Shan Si, Hu Peh, Hu Nan, Shan Tung ; the Dominicans in Fuh Kien ; the Milan Congregation in Ho Nan ; the Belgian (Immaculate Heart) Congregation in Mongolia. Of course, most of these missionaries mean well, and, in very many cases, devote their whole lives to the ungrateful task ; but it is the monstrous combination of extra-territorial jurisdiction with religion which so rankles in the Chinese mind, and unless we temper our militant zeal with plain common-sense humanity, we men of European race will continue for ever abhorrent in the eyes of one-third of our kind.

## BOOK III

### RELIGIOUS

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE RELIGION OF THE CHINESE

THERE are many foggy opinions abroad upon the subject of Chinese religion or irreligion. In books we may read the most learned disquisitions on the Buddhist, Taoist, and other doctrines. Towards the close of this paper a short examination will be made into the history of Chinese Buddhism; but it will be much more to the purpose, in the first instance, to inquire what is the actual condition of the Chinese mind at this moment, and how far that mind is practically swayed by religious sentiment of any kind. In order to do this, the most satisfactory way will be to take the Chinese, province by province, as I have myself actually seen them, leaving it to the reader to make his own general deductions.

During a residence of over two years in Peking I was much thrown into "religious" society. It is the custom there for all Europeans who can afford it, and whose occupations permit of their absenting themselves, to retire to "the hills" towards the end of May. There they remain until the beginning of October, riding in to town once a week or so, should business require it; but as a general rule transacting their affairs at the temples. Most of these temples are dotted about the Western Hills, and are collectively known as *Pa Ta-ch'u*, or "Eight Great Places;" but there are others farther north, towards the Ming Tombs; farther south, over the Lou-k'ou Bridge—the new railway terminus; and farther east, in the vicinity of the Imperial Summer Palace, which

\* My own papers on all these are separately republished.

the Allies destroyed in 1860. Amongst them are two or three nunneries. I visited the whole of these religious establishments at various times, and spent one or two months consecutively in half a dozen of them, so that I had ample opportunity to study the priestly character. As a rule, I found the priests a quiet, harmless, and respectable set of men. It was quite the exception for one to possess any learning, even in Chinese ; whereas, I never met a single man who had any notion of the meaning of the Tibetan prayers which are recited daily from clumsy transcriptions in Chinese character. The nuns were in most cases totally unlettered, as Chinese women in the north usually are. Both priests and nuns shave the whole head. The social position of priests in the neighbourhood of Peking is hard to define. Their calling is universally despised, and they are almost invariably spoken of with good-natured contempt. If they are treated with politeness—as they always are, so long as they observe decorum—it is not so much on account of the sanctity of their cloth, as because it is the social practice for mutual strangers in China, on all occasions, to accost each other politely where no adverse interests are involved. Perhaps their position would be best defined by comparing them with the illiterate vergers who habitually conduct strangers round the abbeys and cathedrals of England, enlarging here and there upon events in English history, or upon the mysteries of “Decorated,” “Perpendicular,” and other architecture. The Chinese priest offers a cup of tea to most “patrons,” and expects to be “tipped” for it ; as also for any other little services he may render, such as lighting a candle, burning a paper prayer, casting a divining rod, and so on. He is generally able to converse intelligently upon the crops, the weather, the market prices of food, fodder, and tobacco ; he is as shrewd and competent as any of his lay countrymen in the matter of striking a bargain ; and if he is treated rudely he is quite as good a hand at “billingsgate” as the average peasant. Very often he is also the village school-master, and, as such, possesses a certain amount of pedagogic influence along with his elementary scholarship. As the owner, or manager, of fairly extensive glebes, he is likewise to be counted with as an employer of labour and a dealer in



produce. Even more, his ghostly calling, though regarded somewhat contemptuously, gives him a certain influence in the village councils, partly because he is usually an elderly man, and partly because he is not troubled with parents, wife, or children; and enjoying, as he does, a well-defined financial position, is therefore able to take a more colourless view of petty local disputes than would a common rustic or local tradesman. In China there is no such thing as a "gentleman;" but, so far as any refinement of manner can give colourable title to that status, a priest is generally coarse, and the reverse of a "gentleman." I found that all priests abstained—unless tempted—not only from meat and wine, but very often also from the "savories," such as garlic, onions, scallions, chives, etc. Most of them used tobacco freely, both in the form of snuff and in that of smoke. One or two well-to-do specimens smoked opium, but always in decent privacy. As the leading priests were, in the majority of instances, old men, the question of private morals seldom came to the fore; as to the younger men, they were not, as a rule, well spoken of; but whatever indiscretions they may have committed were carefully veiled and kept out of sight. It is the custom for the *fang-chang*—the abbot, or managing priest—to have one or two boys attached to his person as learners or acolytes. In due time these boys, who are often "adopted," look forward to the abbatial succession. Ghostly influence, except as above described, the priests have none; nor have they any comforting or solacing family or social influence. At funerals, or during plagues, dearths, portents, etc., their services are professionally called for, always in exchange for a money payment;—that is all. In other respects their moral character stands no higher than that of the lay villager, who also, in most cases, is an industrious, decent individual. It must not be supposed that the corruption of which one hears so much is universal. The "means to do ill deeds" are not often at hand in the country districts, where private life is ordinarily quite amiable. Most of the priests at "the hills" enjoy more than ordinary affluence and personal consideration, by reason of the visits they frequently receive from imperial princes and nobles, palace eunuchs, and officials on a visit to the capital, and such-like persons of wealth and distinction out

for a day's private holiday, or sent on an official mission to pray for rain, fine weather, the birth of a son and heir, etc., etc. In the Yangtsze provinces, from the sea all the way up to Sz Ch'wan, I found that the priests were distinctly below the not very high level of the Peking bonzes in credit and respectability. There is much more travelling in the central parts of China, and priests seem to wander extensively from one monastery to the other. The range of dialects is such as to make them all fairly comprehensible to one another, whereas around Peking a special dialect is spoken, which, though easily understood by persons of education and intelligence along the Great River, is yet sufficiently different to make the northern speakers feel away from home.

The Chinese have a saying :—

“When ill, embrace Buddha's feet,  
When well, neglect to burn incense ;”

which means very much the same as our

“When the devil was ill, the devil a saint would be ;  
When the devil was well, the devil a saint was he.”

This, indeed, is the usual attitude of the Chinese mind with regard to religion. The Buddhist priests maintain a passive attitude, and attempt no proselytizing. In no part of China have I ever found that the hope of happiness or fear of punishment in another world (though both are taught by Buddhism) exercised the slightest influence over personal conduct. There is, indeed, a very strong feeling that if a gross neglect of family duty be committed, or a serious offence against clan interests, spiritual vengeance may overtake the guilty in the shape of unappeased ghosts, neglect by one's own children to maintain a decent burial-ground, and so on ; or that during life there may be retribution in the shape of sick or dead children, poverty, ill-luck, and such-like ; but this feeling has little, if anything, to do with the doctrines of Buddhism, and dates from a time long anterior to the appearance of Indian missionaries in China. The fact is that, whatever may have been the conflicting influences of Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism at different periods of Chinese history, the residue of religious sentiment which

has survived is nothing more than the ancient Shamanism of the Tartars, of which Taoism was the Chinese refined form, coupled with the strong ancestral feeling so peculiar to the Chinese, and here and there tinged with Buddhistic, and possibly Manichean, conceits. Shamanism may be defined as the natural superstition common to all uninstructed mankind, until such time as artificial dogma or social philosophy shall have competed with it. Man sees that fellow-man is the only visible force possessing at once the will and the intelligence to do good and harm to him ; and, therefore, he invests all other mysterious powers or phenomena—such as wind, sunshine, rain, darkness, eclipses, cold, etc.—with the nearest imaginable copy of the only will and intelligence with which he is ocularly familiar : in other words, with human attributes. Even we moderns, in our feeble human presumption, have got no further than to imagine ourselves to be shaped like the Deity. To a certain extent animals possess the same will as men, if not the same intelligence ; and, in some measure, animals are therefore likewise invested by the Chinese with imaginary powers over Nature. Only a month or two ago \* the Emperor, on the proposition of the Board of Rites, directed the viceroys of provinces to assemble, with their suites, in mourning dress, and “save the sun” from being devoured by the dog of popular imagination during the recent eclipse, which, absurdly enough, the Board at the same time announces will take place on a given date between certain hours and minutes. As the Chinaman walks through the forest at night, he whistles or sings to frighten the “ghosts” away. When a plague overtakes a town, fires are lit and crackers exploded to drive off the evil spirits. Prayers are offered for rain and fine weather, as with us. I was myself once attacked because my unholy presence had kept the rain away.† There is a considerable amount of disguised *linga* worship, especially in the south of China ; and in any case prayers for children, offered up by women, are common enough in every province. The adoration or appeasement which the Chinese “believer” is thus always ready to offer up to the dead or to spirits, in the hope of obtaining immediate

\* This was first published in 1896.

† See chapter on “Falling, he fell” (*John Chinaman*, Murray, 1901).

advantage or escaping imminent injury thereby, differs in only a very slight degree from the same ceremonies offered to a living individual. The average Chinaman is always ready to fling himself on the ground and *kow-tow* to any person possessing the power to reward or injure him. Chinese prayers and sacrifices are commonplace and practical. There is nothing ethereal, imaginative, ecstatic, sublime, or in any way holy about them; it is simply, like all other Chinese transactions, a question of bargaining or money's worth. They even thrash their gods if no results come of persistent prayer. The Emperor himself "rewards" the gods frequently if their succour comes sharp; and in one instance I remember reading a decree instructing the Governor to admonish a lazy deity. The Empress of China a few years ago issued an order ordering Buddhist priests to pray for rain at one temple and Taoists at another. In the same way, at Singapore,\* there is an annual custom of visiting a certain Portuguese church, in which a statue of the Virgin Mary is devoutly worshipped by the pagans, on account of some alleged miraculous services rendered many years ago to some local worthy who prayed to her. The priest himself told me this, and assured me that it had nothing whatever to do with the ordinary converts, but was an annual pagan proceeding, which the Church was only too glad to encourage.

I found the southern Chinese, especially those in Canton province, very much more religious than the northerners, at least so far as outward observances are concerned. Every house in the town has, in addition to the usual internal Russian icon-like shrines (even these are much neglected in the north), a neat little stone niche at the porch in the street; and every morning and evening tapers or candles are ignited here. The great Canton autumn festival of "All Souls," as it is usually called by foreigners, is one of the sights of the world. Miles of streets are festooned with lamps, and hung with groups of the most gorgeously and richly dressed images. One of my servants died whilst I was living inside the native city, and although the "chief butler" † was a northerner, and, as such, almost totally destitute of religious feeling, yet it

\* See chapter on "Pagan Christians" (*John Chinaman*, Murray, 1901).

† See chapters on "Death of A-sz" and "Chang-êrh" in *John Chinaman*.

was decided by the servants as a body (as much for my sake as for theirs) to have a couple of priests in to perform two days' services round the coffin. The butler in question was of a purely agnostic temperament, with no "morals" of any kind; and yet he always abstained with more than religious zeal from the use of spirituous liquors and tobacco, and for more than twenty years sent home half his wages to his mother. On the death of his wife, who was a lunatic, he remarried, and kept his new wife with him; she was a southerner, and was readily allowed by her lord to set up her own "joss." I was at fixed periods the chief subject of her prayers; these, so far as I could make out, were not for the welfare of my soul, but for my health and long life, in order that the flow of wages might ever go on.

Although external religion is more in evidence in the south than in the north of China, the priests are decidedly of a lower caste. Many of them are stated to be, and have the appearance of being, debased criminals who have fled to the monastery as to a sort of Alsatia or sanctuary. Though I believe the law recognizes no such immunity, popular custom gives the necessary sanction; and as the law is never put into force by the mandarins for private offences except on the application of individuals, the right of sanctuary may for all practical purposes be said to exist. A guilty priest is sometimes punished by the local executive, sitting with the local ecclesiastical authority. Here and elsewhere one may see the priests cremated; but although Marco Polo often speaks of burning the dead, such a custom no longer exists, except in the case of priests. The morals of the Canton priests are either very bad or are much suspected, for the local authorities have had, in recent years, to issue very frequent proclamations forbidding women to visit the temples; and, indeed, a few years ago one of the finest monasteries in Canton was burnt down by an enraged mob, owing to some real or fancied misconduct of the priests during a popular "woman's holiday." When I was at Canton, I made the acquaintance of the Taoist "Pope," who had come in his boat all the way from "Dragon Tiger Hill" in Kiang Si.\* He was sixty-first in direct descent from Chang Tao-ling, who

\* See chapter on "Taoist Pope" in *John Chinaman*.



was ennobled by the Han Emperors of China nearly 2000 years ago, and took up his residence on the mountain in question: he is stated to have "ascended into Heaven" at the "Egret Screaming Hill" in Sz Ch'wan. A thousand years later, the Sung Emperors conferred extensive estates upon the family. The soul of each deceased Pope is supposed to pass by transmigration into the body of some junior member of the family. This man, whose name was Chang Jên-chêng, was well educated and intelligent: he had discussed religion with several Protestant missionaries, and was good enough to write me a "charm." Shortly after that I left Canton; but the agnostic butler valued the charm so highly that I allowed him to paste it over the door of my house in Sz Ch'wan: possibly for that reason my house was attacked by a mob, and I narrowly escaped; or perhaps Chang Jên-chêng would argue that I should not have escaped at all if the charm had not been there.

Every Chinese year is under the protection of a tutelary god, who takes his turn in rotation. In prefaces to books, the name of the yearly god is usually given, in addition to the ordinary dates. At the spring festivals special attention is paid to the shrine of this deity. In many places it is the custom to "see the old year safely out." In the island of Hainan, I particularly noticed that old clothes and old furniture were cast into ponds at this time, and with that object in view. The Cathay Tartars, who ruled North China a thousand years ago, used on the first day of the new year to roast salt inside the tent, whilst sorcerers walked round it: the floor was sprinkled with it to drive the rats away, "and frighten off the devils."

One of the strangest "religious" feelings in China is the sentiment against desecrating paper which has writing upon it. This prejudice does not extend to non-Chinese writing. In 1882 an Imperial decree even forbade the manufacture in Peking of new paper from manuscript or printed waste paper. In the streets of most towns are boxes for the reception of waste fragments marked "for respectful saving of documentary papers." This sentiment undoubtedly partakes of a religious feeling, and is somewhat akin to the repugnance the most cynical Christian would have towards utilizing the Bible for

wrapping up cheese or butchers' meat. The idea is reverence for the instrument by which the great thoughts of antiquity were conveyed to mankind. In one city I came across an official proclamation issued by the Provincial Judge. In it he strictly forbade the manufacture of "resurrection paper" from old documents, and even offered rewards to informers. In the same way documents could not be used to repair walls, windows, or shoes; it was forbidden to stamp shoe-soles with a written trade-mark, for "nothing could be more disrespectful than to imprint characters upon receptacles for the feet." In Japan I noticed that it gave offence even to point at objects with the feet.

There is also a pretty generally diffused prejudice in China against using cattle for food: it is not akin to the Hindu sentiment (although, as a matter of fact, the latter may originally have been based upon the same principle); it is the expression of a feeling of gratitude for the ox, to whose labours in the field man owes so much: possibly it is Manichean, for between 631 and 843 that religion had a great vogue in many provinces. Since the advent of Europeans, who insist upon having their beef, this prejudice has somewhat abated, at all events near the treaty ports; but it is frequently resuscitated in times of drought and distress, and a hostile feeling is often officially fostered by the mandarins, whose sole apparent motive appears to be to make themselves cheaply offensive to the foreigner. The Chinese have no scruple in eating beef from an ox which has died a natural death. To save the trouble of burying them, the carcasses of diseased cattle are often thrown into rivers, under pretext that to bury them would be to corrupt the soil: the result sometimes is that the fish grow maggoty and breed cholera.

The sanctity of oaths is scarcely realized in China, at least so far as depositions in a court of justice are concerned. True, a makeshift oath of doubtful genuineness has been devised for use in British courts of justice; but it is absurd to put the technicalities of the Western law of perjury into force with such an untruthful nation as the Chinese. The Chinese seem to observe family vows with fair fidelity, and also such genuine oaths as are involved in secret associations or private friendships. The custom of blood-letting, *i.e.* sucking or drinking

a few drops of each other's blood, is very common as a sanction. The sprinkling of chickens' blood is also a phenomenon I frequently noticed during my travels, in connection with exorcising, consulting oracles, etc. A cock is almost invariably carried in an open basket by boatmen, and the bird's throat is cut at dangerous rapids in order to propitiate Neptune (*Deus fluvialis*).

The strongest of all religious feelings in China, which, like most of those we have above described, has nothing whatever to do with Buddhism, is that of reverence for one's predecessors. It is weaker in the extreme north than in the south; but that is only natural, when we consider the secular influence of the Tartars, many of whom still despise the old and neglect the dead. Notwithstanding this, the feeling may be described as universal. The idea seems to be that each human being is merely a link in the endless family chain, and that if ancestral sacrifices be neglected, or male heirs not forthcoming, the continuity of existence will be broken. Thus it is that, however common infanticide may be, male children are never murdered. Unmarried females being almost an unknown phenomenon in China, and a woman ceasing on marriage to belong to her father's family, women are regarded much in the light of merchandise. In the same way, the continuity of existence is broken by the loss of a limb; hence the deeply rooted objection to surgical operations. In the whole empire it is hardly possible to find a Chinaman with but one arm or leg. A criminal naturally dislikes execution, and strangulation is much more painful than decapitation; yet with the head on the shoulders one can always make a presentable appearance in the world to come. This world, according to the Chinaman's inborn notions, is simply a repetition of the present one, and nothing more: the same mandarins, "squeezes," pleasures, and evils. The idea in sacrificing to the spirits is to keep them quiet in their new sphere, and to prevent them from coming back to "howl" for assistance. Even the Emperor, in conferring posthumous honours, invariably winds up with the words, "and this in order to comfort the migrated soul." So far as a Chinese has any anticipations of future bliss, he simply contemplates a repetition of his present experiences. If he is a bad man

here, he will be one there ; hence he conforms his conduct to spiritual good just so far as he does so with a view of gaining human credit on earth, and no further. There is no dread of death, except in so far that it is painful and a sad severance. Though the Buddhist stories of Heaven and Hell are freely repeated, no Chinaman seriously believes them, nor is his conduct ever motivated, as it is with Christians, by hopes and fears of what may happen in a future life.

The true attitude of the intelligent classes towards religion is that officially laid down by the Emperor Tao-kwang, grandfather of the present Emperor. It is in effect :—"All religions are nonsense ; but the silly people have always believed in ghosts and after-life, and, therefore, in order to conciliate popular feeling, We are disposed to protect every belief, including Christianity, so long as there is no interference with the old-established customs of the State." The last clause was also uttered to the Jesuits in 1690 by the Emperor K'ang-hi. Confucius had no religion, and even declined to discuss the question ; his system is revered simply as the embodiment of decency and order. From our point of view there is a slight touch of priggishness about it ; but, anyway, it is the Chinese version of "the religion of a gentleman," even though the gentlemen may not exist in large numbers. As to the popular attitude towards religion, it need not be discussed at all from an academical point of view, being simply a bundle of ignorant prejudices. From a practical point of view it is, of course, extremely important, for it is by no means a matter of indifference to us that the Chinese peasant or labourer should imagine that we use babies' eyes for photography, indulge in monstrous immoralities, despise our ancestors, play religious tricks with convert women, and such-like things. These superstitions are not grosser or more dangerous than were the Middle-Age notions current in Europe touching witchery, heresy, or supernatural agency ; nor are they sillier than the Russo-Austro-Franco-German prejudices against the Jews. It is simply a question of education ; not only of book-learning ; but also of good roads, travel, commerce, interchange of thought, kind treatment, and reasonable concession on our own side.

Buddhism was first heard of in China eighteen hundred and



forty years ago (A.D. 65). Some tell the following story, which is less accurate:—China (about B.C. 130) was at war with the Scythians, and her envoy, who had been sent to the Pamir region to try and create a diversion against these fierce Tartars, heard, whilst in Affghanistan, of India and its *fout'u* faith. This is the modern pronunciation of two Chinese syllables, which then spelt the sound *Vuddhu*, or “Budh,” and which are still pronounced in Japan *Bodz*—our English word “bonze.” A hundred years later the Indo-Scythian King reigning in the Udjana, and Balkh region, orally communicated the Buddhist canon to a Chinese envoy, or traveller; and this is the very first the Chinese ever heard of images or precise teachings.—The real facts are that, in A.D. 62, in consequence of a vision, the Chinese Emperor sent to India for a copy of the canon, which was brought back, together with some missionaries, and duly translated. The Emperor’s brother became a devotee; but the faith was soon discredited. Another hundred years passed, and missionaries from India, *viâ* Turkestan, came trooping steadily in. Shrines were erected in the palace, monasteries were built, and by A.D. 220 five thousand families had been converted. China was now divided into the northern or Tartar-ruled empire, and the southern or native-ruled. Both patronized Buddhism, as also did the minor rulers of those western parts of China now known as Yün Nan and Sz Ch’wan, which had then extensive commercial and political relations with Burma (then called Byu), Siam (then in Yün Nan, and called Nan Chao or Luk-Tai), and India. In the fifth century the Scythians became once more powerful; they ruled North China, and were strong supporters of Buddhism. Buddôchinga and Kumârajîva, amongst other Hindu bonzes, exercised a commanding court influence. The modern Chinkiang became the great Buddhist centre of the southern dynasty.\* The priests now became shamefully degenerate, overweening, luxurious, and immoral, and in A.D. 446 they were hunted from their monasteries throughout the Tartar empire of the north. But they soon regained their influence, and, under the guidance of Bôdhidharma, the southern or Chinese Emperor became quite a religious sot. In A.D. 588 his successor of the Ch’ên dynasty actually sold himself to

\* See “Early Buddhism,” *As. Quart. Review*, July, 1902.



Buddha as a slave. Meanwhile, the Tartar Emperor solemnly proclaimed Confucianism as ranking before Buddhism; Taoism\* came last in rank (Taoism may be described as a philosophical mysticism, mixed with alchemy and charlatanism in its later forms). The Sui Emperors, who reunited China under one rule, were robust supporters of Buddhism; but under the T'ang dynasty there was a good deal of scepticism and persecution. Emperors alternated between slavish adoration and brutal scepticism. In 839 there were 265,000 monks and nuns in the empire; in 845 nearly all the monasteries were destroyed, including those of the Manicheans, Nestorians,† and Mazdéans. Neither the Cathayan nor the Golden Tartar dynasties of North China did much for or against Buddhism; but the Mongols‡ supported all religions. Kublai was greatly under the influence of the Tibetan priest, Pagspa. The later Mongol Emperors were poor superstitious creatures, and may be said to have been dynastically ruined by pandering to grossly corrupt Buddhism. The native Chinese dynasty of Ming, which succeeded the Mongols, and reigned until the Manchus conquered China, 260 years ago, kept Buddhism within strict bounds. In 1430 the Emperor said:—"In our own day men are as superstitious as ever." A century later one of his successors burnt all Buddhist sanctuaries in the palace precincts, destroyed all books and images, and pitched the holy relics away. One, however, is still in existence, under a *stûpa* near the Marble Bridge of Peking. The Manchus have from the first made intelligent use of Buddhism as a political lever, and the Emperor reserves to himself the right to sanction the transmigration of "souls."

\* See "Taoist Religion," *Dublin Review*, July, 1903.

† See "Nestorian Stone," *Dublin Review*, Oct., 1902.

‡ See "Early Christianity," *As. Quart. Review*, July, 1903.

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## CHAPTER II

PERSONAL REMINISCENCES TOUCHING CHRISTIAN  
MISSIONARIES IN CHINA, COREA, BURMA, ETC.

PEKING was the first place I went to after my arrival in China in 1869. There, of course, everything, including the missionary question, was new to me. For the first four months—the summer months—we all lived out at “the hills,” Peking being a disagreeable place both to every sense and in every sense during the hot weather. Missionaries are on quite a different footing in Peking to what they are at the ports or in the interior. There is, or at least there was then, absolutely no European society in the Manchu metropolis except that made up of officials and missionaries. Just as on a desert island each individual stands upon his own merits, and one man is as good as another, so in Peking the ministers of diplomacy met daily on even terms with the ministers of religion,\* and (as indeed happened with one of them in 1895) had to resign their membership of the club if they were dissatisfied with the action of the missionary or the student committee. In fact, the pleasantest social meetings were at the missionary houses, for there no questions of rank and precedence could intrude, even if it had been desired to obtrude them. The Protestant missionaries, from June to October, occasionally took the air, as we lay mortals did, at the hills. Some remained always in town, and the airings were in any event of course taken for a shorter time than in our case, and turn by turn. The Catholic missionaries invariably remained in Peking with their flocks, and, unlike the Protestants, dressed in Chinese clothes, “pigtail” included. On one occasion I even saw a native picture of the Passion, in which the two thieves wore the Manchu queue; but, on the other hand, I once visited a Coptic church in Cairo, and noticed a similar picture, in which even the central figure was black. There is nothing outrageous or blasphemous in this, when it is reflected that each nation naturally most respects

\* On two or three occasions American missionaries acted for many years running as American diplomatic ministers.

its own physical exterior, and, in its pristine simplicity, endeavours to give expression with adequate dignity to a noble subject.

The most prominent—I may say, indeed, by the light of their later services, the most distinguished—Protestant missionaries either held educational posts under the Chinese Government, or passed much of their time in the study of Chinese, their wives doing most of the school work. The men of course preached on Sundays in Chinese, and I remember going once to hear such a sermon: it is difficult for a foreigner to avoid making absurd blunders with so refractory a language, and I noticed one myself. The Catholics are more wary about committing themselves, and generally leave the homilies to natives. At least half the Protestants were Americans. The medical missionary, however, was British, and certainly succeeded in obtaining a very beneficial influence in Peking, even amongst the princely families.\* The chaplain of the Legation (now a bishop)† was somewhat dissatisfied with his diplomatic and consular flock, on account, amongst other things, of our predilection for high-class music, and he soon resigned his salary, if not his place, so that we all became black sheep for a time. I never heard of a “missionary row” of any sort during my two years and a half at Peking. The distinguished labours of Schall and Verbiest have left what the Chinese call a “fragrant aroma” round Catholic enterprise there, notwithstanding the disputes of the last century between the rival “regulars” concerning the precise religious significance of Confucian and ancestor worship, and the consequent misunderstandings and persecutions. When I was at Peking, the old cathedral still stood in the position sanctioned by the Emperor K’ang-hi, though shut out from the imperial view by a hideous high wall, in the “Forbidden City;” but of late years, in consequence of the wise and conciliatory action of his Holiness Pope Leo XIII., it has, I believe, been pulled down and transferred, together with the whole establishment of the Lazarists, to a spot outside the An-ting Gate, if I am not mistaken, near to where Ricci lies buried.

\* Dr. Dudgeon continuously occupied this position up to his death in 1901.

† Bishop Burdon resigned his post in 1895.

The main impression left upon me after two years' residence was that the Protestant missionaries in and around Peking did much good in the following way:—They taught poor children to be clean, speak the truth, and behave themselves modestly, chastely, and quietly; they translated various books into Chinese, and these books were, of course, and still are, exceedingly useful in teaching the rudiments of science and general knowledge; they discouraged vice, whether in the form of opium-smoking, sexual laxity, dram-drinking, gambling, foot-squeezing, money-squeezing, or what not; and they were very useful as interpreters to those Legations which had no proper staff of their own. As to the adult male converts, I could never convince myself they were in earnest. I had several converts for teachers; one old man in particular I remember, with a very red nose.\* I used—it was the custom—to give him a glass of Dutch gin and a Manila cigar to bring out his anecdotal powers; and as he raised the gin to his nose he used to make some sly joke about his Christian scruples. On one occasion I remember his saying that heaven was *miao-miao wu p'ing* (a misty conception); in fact, he used to preach to me the absurdity of the whole doctrine as though I were partly responsible for it. The Catholic missionaries in China go on quite a different tack: they live a life of complete seclusion. Many of them being regulars, or following analogous rules, it is sufficient to say that their mode of life is just what it would be in Europe, except that they invariably wear Chinese clothes and "pigtales." But in Peking the Congregation of the Mission (Lazarists) could hardly be described as "regular" clergy; nor, again, are their ways quite those of the "secular" clergy of Europe. This, however, is a theological point I am incompetent to discuss. The Catholic priests were always ready to crack a joke over a bottle of wine, and, though their creature comforts were fewer, they had none of the austerity of the Protestants; their manner of life was much more disciplined and self-denying. The Chinese mind cannot conceive any priesthood apart from celibacy; as a rule, they treat their own priesthood with a mixture of contempt and respect, varying according to circumstances and locality. In most parts of China the social

\* See chapter on "A Chinese Convert" (*John Chinaman*, Murray, 1901).

position of a Buddhist priest is not unlike that of the mutes, who, in bygone days, were a prominent feature in our English funerals. So long as they are performing functions, and are attired in functional costume, they are regarded with more awe than contempt; no one knows or cares anything of their origin; but the moment they do anything wrong (or are caught at it, for in China, as elsewhere, it is the being caught that does the mischief), this slumbering contempt is rapidly metamorphosed into vengeful hostility. The religious feeling in the vast empire of China varies as much from province to province as it does in Europe; yet everywhere the Catholic method appeals more readily than the Protestant to the Chinese view of what is right. Still, it is unfair to accuse the Protestant missionaries of enjoying too much comfort. The ordinary comforts of a British labouring man's home are viewed as luxuries in China. A clean-curtained glass window, instead of a paper one full of holes; a snow-white bed with tasteful hangings and counterpane, instead of a greasy mat with a bamboo pillow; an airy site with a neat garden, instead of a dirty hovel in which pigs and hens are at home as much as their masters; and, above all, a pretty wife and children;—these ordinary creature comforts of the most modest English household suggest inordinate wealth and luxury to the Chinese mind. It is true, then, the Protestant missionaries live in luxury as compared with their Chinese surroundings; but they certainly do not live more comfortably than they would do at home, nor so expensively as do other Europeans in China. Notwithstanding this, it cannot be denied that they do not frequently cross the line, as the Catholics do, in the reverse direction, and level themselves down, in creature comforts, to the Chinese standard; hence they do not obtain the same credit for self-abnegation.

It was while at Peking in 1870 that I heard of the terrible missionary massacre at Tientsin. The French were the chief sufferers, but unfortunately at that moment France was in the throes of a war with Prussia. Of course the missionaries and the poor nuns were entirely blameless of evil: the utmost that they can, retrospectively, be charged with was indiscretion, in view of Chinese superstition, in their practice of buying up abandoned children or orphans; and, again, the French



consul, who paid the penalty for it with his life, was somewhat imprudent and over-excited in his attempts to stay the mischief. During my year's stay in Tientsin, just after this, I saw a good deal of the missionaries, both Catholic and Protestant. I do not remember any missionary disturbances taking place in the immediate neighbourhood, and the general position of missionaries *vis-à-vis* of other Europeans was much as in Peking, except that, the other Europeans being chiefly mercantile and busy, the disposition to associate with missionaries was less ; and consequently the Protestant missionaries kept more aloof, and took rather a severe view of the peccadilloes of their compatriots. This is always unfortunate. No doubt European sinners require as much spiritual attention in China as do Chinese sinners ; but they are apt to resent personal interference which would not be offered in the larger field at home. Hence the Chinese ask themselves why men who teach persons how to be good are not more appreciated and respected by their own people ; how it is that Europeans (as they did then more than they do now) live openly in a way which their pastors condemn ; how it is that missionaries and merchants keep so much apart, and speak with so little respect of each other ? These, at least, were the points of view submitted to me by my red-nosed Christian friend as he sipped his gin and water—or rather the neat article.

My next experiences were at Hankow. Here most of the missionaries lived at Wuch'ang, the provincial capital on the opposite side of the river. At that time Wuch'ang was considered rather a dangerous place, and there were frequent complaints lodged at the British and United States Consulates of popular ill-treatment of the missionaries. I used to visit them all ; and here I must repeat that none of the Protestant missionaries at Wuch'ang lived a "life of luxury." Most of them having wives, it followed as a matter of course that these wives, being English or American ladies of some education, had to be decently housed. Native life in China is not very decent. There is no real privacy, no cleanliness, no sanitary precaution, no idea of treating women as equals. Hence, compared with the native surroundings, the neatness which every good English housewife delights to lavish on her home has (it had even to me) the appearance in China

of extravagance and luxury. Often, in my later career, when Chinese mandarins have visited me in my improvised consulate—it has nearly always been my lot to live in native houses slightly Europeanized—they have said to me: “How clean everything is! How very luxurious you Europeans are! Fancy having tapestry under the feet!” And this in reference to a ramshackle old building that was considered by the Government unfit for the family of a consular officer to live in. By contrast with the “luxury” of the Protestants at Hankow, the Italian priest in charge of the Franciscan Mission (Friars Minor) lived in the humblest style. I used to go and sit with him too. He wore a shabby old cassock from one year’s end to the other; lived on about £1 a month; took his cigar and glass of wine, or any other good things (when he could get them for nothing), and never spent a cent on himself if he could not: the French consul used to invite all Catholic missionaries to breakfast on Sundays. All this self-denial is very proper and nice. But surely it does not follow that, because one man is bound by the rule of his order to be an ascetic and a celibate, others who start out on quite a different basis are to be blamed for not doing the same? Still, there the facts were: the Catholics lived a humble, penurious life, feeding chiefly on rice and cabbage or skinny chickens; the Protestants were all comfortably housed, and saw very little of native life except in their own chapels and schools. Old Father Angelo and I were great cronies.

I next spent the best part of a year at Kewkiang. There one of the China Inland Mission colporteurs used to complain to me periodically of ill-treatment in the interior. The China Inland Mission is the only Protestant one I know of that clothes its members in “pigtales” and petticoats; there may be others now, but I never came across them. Even the ladies used to wear an adapted Chinese dress; but the effect was so unnatural, I may almost say indecent, that they soon gave it up. It is positively degrading to see the fresh frank face of a tall, light-haired Englishwoman in Chinese trousers, or even in the skirt which some Chinese women wear so as to conceal the trousers. This unfortunate male missionary used to turn up at Kewkiang with the scared expression of a hunted hare. His method was to go with a load of books and tracts in a boat,

sally out (until a brickbat drove him back) into the streets of busy towns, try to sell his tracts and preach (in very lame Chinese), and thus gain matter for his reports to his managers on the progress of the mission. The man was thoroughly conscientious, and did his thankless work bravely, but he was always handicapped by the feeling that his own authorities thought him a nuisance, which indeed he was. I used to do my best for him, but it was a wretched business, and I felt I had no reasonable ground to stand upon in insisting that he should be protected during his raids upon the ungodly ; however, I did it. As a rule, the Inland Mission abstains on principle from asking consular interference ; but sometimes, as in this case, it was unavoidable. Most of the other Protestants were Americans, comfortably ensconced in excellent European houses far away from the Chinese noises and smells. The men made occasional tours inland as preachers and colporteurs ; but Americans certainly do not take kindly to roughing it, and they are usually much better paid than the British, and more especially than the Inland Mission. The ladies did useful work in schools. The Lazarists also had their church and bishopric upon the foreign settlement. They belonged to what is officially called the Congregation of the Mission, and I used often to go and talk with the old bishop, who, I see from the native papers, is still alive, and celebrating his jubilee (1896).<sup>\*</sup> He used to smoke his cheap Chinese tobacco out of a Chinese copper pipe : the interior arrangements of the "palace" were of the simplest ; almost as severe as those of a Jesuit establishment. Bishop and priests all wore Chinese clothes and "pigtailed." What they did in the far inland I never inquired, but I believe they had numerous chapels, both in the large towns and in the lake villages, and made periodical visits to them for purposes of inspection. There were 16,000 native Christians in the whole province ; certainly there were not 1600 Protestants ; I doubt if there were 160. This province was decidedly a hostile one.

Thence I went to Canton. There all the Protestant missionaries, without exception, lived comfortably on the European concession, or at the hospital. I repeat I do not mean to say they were more comfortable than at home, but

<sup>\*</sup> Bishop Bray died about a year after this was first published.

they did no "roughing" it, and I had just as good a meal at their houses when, as was frequently the case, they hospitably invited me as (barring liquor) at my own, or at the merchants'. Chapels were often attacked, both in the city and in the suburbs, but they were usually in charge of native priests. At Fatshan and the neighbouring towns there were frequent "missionary rows," both Catholic and Protestant, but no heads were ever broken; after the usual amount of wrangling and threatening, compensation was generally forthcoming; and so things dragged on. I once went to the service at the chief American chapel, and, in company with the Chinese present, partook of the "Sacrament." We all remained in our seats whilst claret and water was handed round in a big glass jug or some such vessel. The service was all in Cantonese. Although I understood that dialect, I had some difficulty in following the theology; but the preacher was fluent, and the congregation seemed orderly and interested. The school arrangements were excellent. The chief good missionaries do is in disciplining the sloven Chinese thoughts, chastening the social and moral tone, and inculcating orderliness of mind and body. I could never see that either the ignorant or the educated Chinese cared much for dogma. As the French priests used to say: *Ce sont de tristes Chrétiens!* The favourably disposed Chinese used to say to themselves: "Here is a family of barbarians who state that they have come to do us good. It looks rather suspicious for a hairy barbarian, with a plump wife and chubby children, to come all this way over the seas on that account, especially as he knows most of us loathe the very sight of him. However, he has at last consented to arrange his men and his women on different sides of the chapel. His language, though obscure, is not injurious. He does not get drunk like sailors, nor smoke opium like we do; he even tells us how to get pills and cure ourselves of the vice. His wife and daughters are certainly very clean and pretty, as they go about their work in the chapel and schools. He tells us of a world to come where all are equal and welcome: it will not be particularly pleasant to meet barbarians there, but it is not a bad future for poor folks like ourselves. Our children are taught for nothing in the schools; they learn English, and



at Hong Kong may get billets of some sort ;” and so on. Where the mischief comes in is when the missionary makes too much fuss about the sin of ancestor-“worship”—a very harmless bit of human nature ;—where he appears to protect his converts in their legal disputes ; where he unwisely assails Confucius and Mencius, whose doctrines can, with a little casuistry, be easily made to square with Christianity ; where he buys up babies too willingly ; where he locks his place up instead of letting the public in freely ; where he gets hold of “bad hats” as converts, and allows himself to be humbugged by them. It is the Medical Mission which is the great success at Canton. Even the most hostile Chinese admit that. No attack, to my knowledge, has ever been made upon the medical missionaries, some of whom I am proud to number amongst my most respected friends. All the missionaries in or near Canton—and their name is legion—share in the reflected glory of this magnificent hospital, which is, in a way, the chief civilizing influence in South China. The Catholics belong to the Missions Etrangères, and have about 27,000 converts in the province. I met scores of this mission afterwards in other parts. It will suffice to say here that they live at Canton as frugally and simply as elsewhere. As a rule they devote their whole lives to the work, and never go home. They always wear Chinese attire. They are apt to keep aloof from Europeans, probably because the cathedral lies at some distance from the foreign concession ; but they give their consul plenty of work.

On the occasion of my second period of service at Canton, I well remember one missionary incident.\* I was just finishing the solitary midday meal, known in the East as “tiffin,” when a letter was handed to me. It was from a French missionary, saying that the cathedral was about to be attacked. The cathedral is the most prominent structure in Canton, and its lofty spires (constructed, some say, in breach of an undertaking that they should not exceed a moderate height) have always been an eyesore to the more hostile of the natives. Long practice had naturally enabled me to write in Chinese ; so I took out a red visiting “card,” such as short official messages are often written upon in China, and reported the

\* See chapter on “A Missionary Row” in *John Chinaman*.



matter without much comment to the Viceroy Chang, whose palace was three miles away. Both the British and the French consuls had gone to Macao that morning, but I wrote in my superior's name. I had no sooner done that than another letter came, giving rather alarming details. I sent for the Chinese writer, and after half an hour despatched another messenger with a more formal document to the Viceroy. Chinese writers are so pedantic and slow with their brush, that in the matter of urgency it is often better to waive formal style and scribble off a few lines in pencil. My task was made the more difficult in that the affair was no business of the British consul, who, in any case, was not there. During the next three hours urgent messages from different French missionaries kept arriving every half-hour or so, and the unhappy Viceroy was bombarded with pencil notes in proportion, care being taken that no loophole for escaping responsibility should be left to him. Then the French commander of one of the Viceroy's gunboats came to wish me to authorize his "landing a force," which I declined to do. The English commander of a similar gunboat came to offer his services. Next the Chinese commander of the forces guarding the settlement came to ask what it was all about, and to ask for "orders." For five hours I did not move from my seat, and I suppose I must during that time have written twenty letters in French, English, and Chinese, besides receiving missionaries and others concerned. At last the Viceroy's "final" came. He said: "I have over 2000 troops on the spot, and I have been stoned by the mob myself; I cannot possibly do more than assure you that neither the French missionaries nor the general settlement need be in danger if every one keeps quiet." Up to that moment I had had no time to think of anything else, but it then all at once occurred to me that I ought now to tell the other Europeans. This sudden statement of mine that something had arisen in connection with the cathedral which necessitated the deploying of 2000 men naturally startled the Europeans. A meeting was held, defence measures were organized, a gunboat was sent for; all was quiet, and the next morning I was twitted with having got up a "scare" about nothing. However, two years later, a similar scare occurred; the mob actually did

reach the concession; several European houses were burnt and pillaged, the ladies had to take to the steamers; and two years were consumed in haggling about compensation.

Between my two visits to Canton I spent a few months at Chinkiang. There I had only land cases to settle. The Catholic mission was a Jesuit one, and the Jesuits always succeed in managing their own affairs. I do not remember any proselytizing Protestant missionaries at all, except that it was here I first saw some ladies of the China Inland Mission in native dress. There was one English medical missionary who did good work, but the land cases were conducted by correspondence through missionaries at some other port who had not yet entered upon the Chinkiang field. I also spent a short time at Foochow, and subsequently visited both Protestant and Catholic missions in the interior of Fuh Kien province. The Protestant missionaries at Foochow have often been charged with "luxury." It is true they have a sanatorium or two of their own, one on the sea and one up a mountain; but the climate necessitates an occasional change. The Catholic mission is Spanish. When I visited it, things were at rather a low spiritual ebb. The late massacres at Kucheng (1895) prove that the Protestant missionaries are willing to run great risks in the interests of what they consider to be the truth. But when I was there very little work was done inland. The celebrated Wu-shih Shan case was just beginning in the city itself.

After this I spent a year in the "hotbed" of missionary success—the province of Sz Ch'wan, which contains 80,000 Christians. French priests of the Missions Etrangères are to be found in every large town, and, as I travelled thousands of miles, I made the acquaintance of many of them. In every single case they lived on a pittance varying (at present gold rates) from £2 to £3 a month per man. When I say that their houses were always neat, I speak comparatively, and from a Chinese point of view; in no case was the "luxury" greater than that of a Jesuit seminary in England; in some cases the missionary occupied a purely Chinese house: mud floor, straw mat for bed, paper windows, no "comforts" of any description. An allowance of cheap French wine was supposed to be made, but it could not have been distributed

regularly or evenly, for I was usually entertained, when I suddenly turned up, with a bottle of altar wine to celebrate the rare occasion. Whatever their poverty, these French missionaries invariably give you of their best. There were two, if not three bishops, but I only knew the one belonging to the eastern diocese of Chungking, although I often travelled in the others' dioceses too, and stayed one night with M. Coupat, who afterwards was created a bishop. The Vicar-General lived just as simply as the other priests.\* I often went to smoke a pipe with him and his staff. They never any of them dared to go out-of-doors except in a closed sedan chair: the people were most hostile. I believe I was the first European who ever walked through the streets regularly in European costume; other lay Europeans had lived and occasionally walked there, but they thought it more prudent, as a rule, to remain indoors. But I liked exercise, though it was miserable work being hooted at all the time, and I persisted. Nemesis followed in due course, as will shortly appear. One amusing incident occurred to me as I was travelling in the wildest part of Kwei Chou province (also under the Missions Etrangères). I used to proceed on foot, wearing in summer-time absolutely nothing but a pair of duck trousers and a gauze singlet, carrying an umbrella instead of wearing a hat. Of course I was always covered with dust or mud, and, being usually both unwashed and unshaven, I did not present a very awe-inspiring appearance. My official blue four-bearer chair, with two spare bearers, two servants in chairs, each with a spare bearer, baggage coolies, and so on, brought up the rear at some distance, the policy of the chairmen being to discourage me as much as possible from taking rests in my chair. As I was approaching a tiny travellers' temple, standing at the side of a mountain road, I saw a very respectable Chinaman dismount from a sleek mule and place himself in an expectant attitude. This is the proper behaviour of a gentleman to another gentleman, or to an official. I determined to ask him a few questions on local matters, but he turned out to be a French missionary. Of course he was delighted to meet a European. First of all he wanted to

\* Mgr. Blettery died in 1898, having modestly declined the succession to Mgr. Coupat, who had died shortly before him.

know what Imperial Ambassador it was that was coming.\* We both backed into the temple to let the great man come by. But first of all came my fat cook and Wang Êrh (the same man who followed Captain Gill), both asleep in their chairs. No ambassador appearing after my cavalcade had filed past, I asked the missionary what he meant, on which he said: "No one appears to be in the chair; are you one of his suite?" It then transpired that the wings of popular report had transformed me into an "Imperial Ambassador," and that we were both respectfully standing aside to allow my cook and my other servant to pass by. He had some liquor with him, and I regaled the good Father with a cigar in exchange. These meetings were always very interesting; for news from Europe filters very slowly through these parts, and the "hold-off" position in which, for discipline's sake, converts are held, precludes the familiar conversation of priests with Chinese, even if the native had anything particular to say. The French missionaries, at least in these missions, exact the utmost personal deference. No converts of any rank presume to sit down in the presence of a priest, unless invited. I, who am rather democratic in my feelings, used to feel rather uneasy at the excessive deference shown me as I sat and conversed with a priest. Of course, as priests are supposed to be, in a way, under their consuls, and as Frenchmen habitually think more of official position than we do, the priests, if only for policy's sake, could not well minimize my rank as a subordinate consular official (as I then was).

The Protestant missionaries of Chungking in my time all belonged to the China Inland Mission. They wore Chinese clothes, and all went freely about the streets. There was one lady dressed in Chinese "compromise," but she never walked out. These Protestants were pioneers, and did a great deal of useful work in rescuing would-be suicides. It will hardly be believed, but it is a fact, that within the walls of Chungking alone the missionaries were sent for almost every day, sometimes twice or three times a day, to assist in rescuing would-be suicides, usually young women, from the effects of swallowing opium. Several of the Inland Mission had a smattering of medical knowledge, which, in a country like China,

\* See chapter on "An Imperial Ambassador" in *John Chinaman*.



where quackery is the rule rather than the exception, soon rises to the dignity of medical learning. The excessive contempt felt, or at all events expressed, for Europeans, was somewhat mitigated by the good work done in this way. In short, if I were asked: "What shall we missionaries do to save the souls of the Chinese?" I should unhesitatingly reply, "Fill their pockets with quinine, stomach-pumps, and eye-ointments." The Catholics having been in sole possession for over a century, it was natural that the arrival of Inland missionaries should be viewed with jealousy. At the time I was there, French influence in China was very low, having scarcely recovered from the reflex action of the Franco-German war. Moreover, the French bishops had for some years past been assuming a semi-official position which was considered by some, including their own official authorities, to border on arrogance. Hence for the present the bishop had gone home; only a Vicar-General was in charge, and the *mot d'ordre* had been given to "draw in his horns." There was a great deal of unrest and uneasiness both in the city and throughout the province; the town of Kiang-pêh (opposite Chungking) was so hostile that it was dangerous for even a lay European to show himself there. I felt sorry to see that Protestants and Catholics were equally imprudent in adversely criticising each other's methods. The French would speak contemptuously of "les ministres et leurs Bibles," whilst the Protestants would sneer at Confession and the Mass. Neither side laid themselves out to do this. I may even say that in calm moments both sides felt the desire to be charitable, or at least saw the practical unwisdom of being uncharitable; still, in competing for "souls," it was only human nature to use the handiest weapons. The effect upon the Chinese was naturally disastrous; they used to say: "These foreigners charge each other with being in error; moreover, it appears from the newspapers that France will not tolerate regulars in her own country; it looks as though France and England were both intriguing for political influence here." Two or three years later the French made the fatal error of utilizing the Christian element of Tonquin in their favour during the Franco-Chinese imbroglio there; the effect of this was instantly felt in Sz Ch'wan, and one of the leading Chinese Christians at Chungking, a man who used to come and see



me very often, was executed, in spite of the most desperate efforts on the part of the French Legation to save him. The nominal charge was that he had unrighteously caused the death of a man in the street during an anti-Christian attack upon his own house.\*

It was during the restless "transition" period above described that an attack was made upon me. As the Vicar-General used to exchange visits with me, and as I used to call upon every French priest in every city I passed, an idea grew up that I was a sort of archbishop, or official inquisitor. I was also supposed to possess the power of seeing through mountains and rivers. I never troubled myself in the least about these things, until, one fine day, after a long period of anxious drought, I returned from a month's journey to find that rumour had been unusually busy in my absence, and that superstitious malignity had marked me out for destruction. As I took my daily afternoon walk, I noticed something unusual in the bearing of the excited crowds I passed, and whilst I was manœuvring as quietly as possible to return home, an old woman was suddenly dragged up and made to clasp my knees and ask for "satisfaction." I perceived at the same instant that my official servant was being surrounded by a ferocious mob. My experience of "mob rows" had already been considerable, so I at once detected a "plant" of some sort, and I saw that my only chance lay in extreme politeness. This succeeded, and I got safely home. Messengers were at once despatched to the authorities, announcing that within half an hour a great riot was certain. Whilst I was awaiting their action, a Protestant missionary came in to say that his house was being threatened, and that the people in the streets accused me of breaking a boy's back. To cut the story short, the mob did arrive in half an hour, and my house was partly demolished; but fortunately at almost the same moment the authorities also arrived with police, and I received no worse injury than a couple of sprained ankles from a fall during the scrimmage.† For three months after this the city was in a most excited state; both Catholics and Protestants were threatened; the drought continued, and

\* See chapter on "The Seed of the Church" in *John Chinaman*.

† See chapter on "Falling, he fell" in *John Chinaman*.

popular rumour went on to charge me with having "stolen the golden duck from the sacred tank," and thus brought on divine vengeance. I never quite understood what it was all about. After three months of weary inactivity things quieted down, and the authorities all over the province were forced by the Viceroy Ting, who was a fairly just man, to mend their ways towards missionaries a little. About four years after that, however, a somewhat similar riot broke out; the extensive premises of the Catholics were burnt down, as also my old house, the residence of my successor, who barely escaped with his life; and disturbances took place all over the province. Chungking is now an open port, and we may hope for better things since the American Commission has (1895-6) visited the Viceroy's capital.

My next experiences were at Wênchow, on the coast. Of all places in China this was the last where a "missionary row" would have been expected. The people were unusually mild; the town was a sort of sleepy hollow; the China Inland Mission (having a one-legged missionary at its head, which fact caused the people to imagine England was a one-legged country) had been in comparatively undisturbed possession for many years before the port was "opened"; the members were nearly all married and kept schools; and all went well until the French imbroglio disturbed men's minds. Matters were not improved by the Commissioner of Customs being a Frenchman; fortunately for himself he was withdrawn just before the storm came, and only lost his property. But, in addition to that, the French Congregation of the Mission had recently established a Catholic church under the care of an Italian priest, and the Methodist Free Church Mission had also sent a man. I was the only consul, and therefore all sects used to apply to me. The usual "rows" were caused by Christians refusing to pay scot in celebration of "heathenish" feasts; or perhaps a non-Christian family would (knowing the mandarins' fears and prejudices) trump up some land squabble against a Christian. Under these circumstances it is sometimes difficult, both for missionaries and consuls, to hold aloof, notwithstanding their obvious risk of being charged with undue meddling; because the Chinese authorities are seldom fair in any case; usually corrupt; and are invariably hostile

to Christians. Still, things dragged on, and it was always possible to patch up a *modus vivendi*. One evening, shortly after the bombardment of the Foochow fleet and arsenal by the French, I was sitting on my verandah smoking a reflective pipe, when I saw a bright light in the midst of the city. Instinctively I felt "here comes the crash." In a few minutes my chief messenger, who lived in the city, crossed the river to my island, and told me Mr. Soothill's Methodist Mission was in flames, and that all European houses were to be destroyed that night.\* In a few more minutes in came the chief Customs officials with their guns and cash-boxes. Meanwhile, flames broke out in half a dozen places, and before midnight three Inland Mission houses, two Customs residences, the Custom House itself, and the Catholic Mission had all been destroyed. All the Customs people were now with me except one, an ex-missionary,† nearly eighty years of age, who had bravely gone alone to the assistance of the other missionaries. It was in the end thought better that the Customs people, who had already lost all their property, should put out to sea, the tumble-down old Consulate really not being worth defending at the risk of so many lives. I, knowing the Chinese better, thought it safer, or at least more comfortable, to remain behind. Meanwhile, nothing was known of the fate of the missionaries. To cut another long story short, the Chinese General, with his gunboat and troops, just turned up in time to save the Consulate: the Customs people were followed, at his order, by another gunboat, and were brought safely back next day, and later on three of the missing men were delivered over to me, having escaped to the mandarins' official residences with no more damage than a few bruises; they looked like Red Indians, as we see them in America, squatting on the railway "cars," for they had no hats or decent clothes, and the mandarins had given each man a consolatory present of a new red blanket and a roll of twenty dollars. The third day the Italian priest was also unearthed, an old "heathen" woman next door to his place having charitably hidden him inside a cord of wood. As soon as the first steamer came, all the missionaries were packed off to

\* Mr. Soothill is still there.

† Dr. Macgowan died at an advanced age some ten years ago.

Ningpo, the Italian priest rigged out in an old smoking-cap of mine and a dressing-gown, and the others in equally "scratch" attire. Fortunately, the ladies had already been sent away to Ningpo in anticipation of riots, and so now nothing remained but to pay the piper after the night's dance. No one was very angry. There were five Powers concerned, besides the Inspectorate-General of Customs; yet so prompt were the mandarins (who in this case had not even the missionary's one leg to stand on by way of justification, and frankly recognized the fact at once) in offering to pay full damages (\$37,000 in all), that the representatives of the Powers, as well as the Customs Inspectorate, were only too glad to close the business at once; in fact, almost the same courier took the news of the "row" and the settlement of it; it was a "record" case in its way, and was forgotten almost at once. I believe nearly all the missionaries, except the one-legged one, who died later on, are still there, each provided with a nice new house instead of the old one, at China's expense.\*

Shortly after that I went to Corea, and amongst the passengers were two curious-looking young Frenchmen; the very expression of their calm, resigned faces suggested martyrdom. They told me they were going as priests to Corea. The history of the Missions Etrangères in Corea is one of the most touching in the annals of the propagation of the Faith. Almost certain death if discovered; absolute disguise and secrecy; utter isolation and discomfort. The Coreans have a strange but convenient custom under which a man in mourning wears a sort of rag or cloth curtain over his face, and must never speak or be spoken to; the capacious Corean hat and robe, together with this curtain and a pair of large spectacles, enable the missionaries to go about—in charge, of course, of friendly natives—quite undetected; and this has invariably been their dress in Corea. The two Frenchmen disappeared, no one knew how, from the steamer during the first night we lay off Chemulpo, and they were never heard of again by me, though I understand one of them was murdered during the recent Japanese war.† The French

\* See chapters on "An Extinguisher at Wênchow" in *John Chinaman*.

† I have since learned that M. Couderc was the one now deceased, and that the other, M. Marvel, is still at Chemulpo.



bishop at the capital (Söul, or Shéol) lived, as his predecessors had done, in absolute seclusion ; but, just before I arrived, treaties had been concluded with foreign Powers ; American and other Protestant missionaries now openly worked at Söul ; and when I left, two years later, I believe even the Catholics were beginning to show their faces. But elsewhere in the interior the secrecy and seclusion were absolute. I had a Christian for my teacher in Corean, and from him I learnt all the strange stories of his craft. Coreans, unlike Chinese and Japanese, make the most staunch and devoted converts ; they have their vices, but there is something exceedingly lovable in the simple Corean character ; torn, however, by political dissension and the conflicting intrigues of European Powers, the country has never yet had a fair chance. But that is a digression. I only once saw a French priest after that. He had got into some odd-looking European clothes for the occasion, and had come to see me about an unhappy Christian who was threatened with decapitation for importing printed books. The Corean prefect, luckily, was a "boon companion" of mine, and had eaten and drunk copiously at sundry feasts I used to give ; although, therefore, the affair was no concern of mine, I managed to induce him to let the man go, much to the gratitude of the Frenchman, who disappeared as mysteriously as he came.\* The bishop wrote to thank me. As to the Protestants, they were nearly all at Söul, and mostly Americans ; they kept schools, periodically prevented the King or Queen from being assassinated, did medical work, translated books, and made themselves generally useful. There was a strong political aroma about their proceedings ; but the surroundings made it almost unavoidable, and I think it may be said without exaggeration that Corea owes its continued political existence to their vigilance. They all lived very comfortably, and took things remarkably "easy ;" but, as in China, comfort and luxury are comparative, and the standard of Söul is so low that respectable European pigs would think twice before accepting the shelter of some Corean cottages. By this time I expect things have very much changed in the missionary way. I never

\* M. Coste, afterwards Provicar for the Mission. See chapter on "A Narrow Escape" in *John Chinaman*.



came across any missionaries in Fusan or Chemulpo ; only at Söul.

The great Jesuit Mission at Shanghai is one of the most powerful organizations of its kind in the world. It has glorious memories behind it, beginning with Ricci, Schall, Verbiest, Gerbillon, and others. Their chief college at Siccawei, or Zi-Ka Wei, near Shanghai, takes its name from the family (*Ka*) of Paul Zi, one of Ricci's early converts, who was born before the Manchus conquered China in 1643. Fontaney was appointed to Shanghai about 1686. What with schools, orphanages, churches, observatories, hospitals, gardens, and what not, this society does an enormous amount of useful work. In most cases the Jesuits have sufficient tact and influence to manage their own affairs with the mandarins ; as with the Protestant Inland Mission, it is one of their principles to call in the aid of the lay power as little as possible. At Chinkiang, which is under the same mission, I once had to put in a friendly word for them in connection with some land dispute, but I think there were special reasons for it, some British merchant's interests being also involved. The only Jesuit missionary I ever met inland was discovered on a river steamer, travelling "deck" amongst the Chinese passengers, dressed in native attire of course, feeding on rice and pork, and reading his Breviary by the light of a faint oil-lamp amidst the fumes of tobacco and opium. In the great Jesuit establishments there is the same poverty and simplicity as elsewhere ; each priest has a living-room, furnished with a small bed, an extra chair for guests, a wash-stand, table, etc. No fires, carpets, curtains, or any other comforts and luxuries, except splendid libraries. They meet for an hour's "recreation" in a large common room about meal-times, and the rest of their day is given up to devotion or special work. All Jesuits are in the right place ; the *bos piger* always does *bos piger's* work, and the *caballus* invariably carries the *ephippia*. Many of them are eminent men in the fields of science—botanists, zoologists, ornithologists, meteorologists, classicists, sinologists, and so on. During the whole of my residence in China I do not remember hearing of any "Jesuit rows." Within the last few years, especially whilst the Sino-Japanese war was going on, and perhaps just before that, during the

Yangtsze missionary troubles, their chapels in the neighbouring towns may have been attacked; but things were soon arranged, and, at all events, at Shanghai and Siccawei there has never been serious trouble. The bishop is also a Jesuit—rather an unusual occurrence, I believe.\*

From Shanghai I went to Tonquin. For a long time the Annam Mission had been under the Spaniards; Jesuits, Dominicans, and Missions Etrangères have all had part in the work, but at present the Spanish Dominicans are confined to Tonquin, the French priests taking the southern provinces. There are no Jesuits now. It is a very large field: there are nine or ten bishops, and nearly a million Christians. The Annamese make better converts than either Chinese or Japanese, whose tricky character, however, they share; but they are gentler and more sympathetic; they do not possess the staunch masculinity of the Coreans. The French bishop at Hanoï gave me rather a cold reception, evidently mistaking me for a "minister with his Bible:" it was very hot, and, to do him honour, I had invented a compromise sort of dress, consisting of white trousers and an alpaca frock-coat; I also carried a book under the arm, for I wanted to consult him about "tones" in speech. No wonder he scented heresy. However, the mistake was soon cheerfully rectified. I need hardly say that no Protestant missionaries would be tolerated in Tonquin, though the French missionaries receive every countenance in British India and Burma. The history of persecution in Annam is almost as touching and bloody as that of the Corean tyranny. Until the French Admiral took action in 1847, and Saïgon was later on occupied in 1858, it was hard to get any satisfaction for anti-Christian outrages. By the treaty of 1862, freedom was given to French and Spanish missionaries to preach throughout the kingdom. I visited the Spaniards at Bac-ning, Haiphong, etc., and met many French priests at various places. There was still a little friction and jealousy in Tonquin, the Spaniards naturally resenting the loss of their exclusive influence; but on the whole both nationalities work loyally to achieve the spiritual ends in view. The days of persecution are now entirely over; if there is the shadow of any left, it comes rather from French

\* Two bishops have died since this was first published.

officialdom than from native mandarins. With such large garrisons of French troops, the unpleasant question of morals also comes in, often much to the chagrin and disappointment of the missionaries. There are fine cathedrals at the two capitals of Hanoi and Saigon, with general missionary activity everywhere, as may be imagined from the fact that there are over 600 priests in the country, nearly half being Frenchmen. I did not observe that either the French or the Spaniards interested themselves much in the conversion of the Chinese ; in the large towns, such as those mentioned, besides Tourane, Faifo, Cholon, Hué, etc., the trading community is chiefly Chinese.

I also made the acquaintance of the French bishop \* at Bangkok ; at various times I visited besides the Siamese sub-kingdoms of the Malay peninsula, but I did not see much Christianity anywhere in Siam. I went to see some American Protestants near Bangkok ; they had schools, and did useful interpretorial and printing work ; but somehow the impression left upon me was that spiritual activity was decidedly weak in these parts. True Buddhists, like the Siamese, are not easily converted.

I went twice to Burma, and on both occasions paid visits to that glorious old man Bishop Bigandet ; also to the other bishop and his priests, at Mandalay : this latter bishop was dying when I saw him, but he smoked a cigar with me very philosophically notwithstanding. Both bishops are now dead. But when proselytizing ceases to be dangerous it ceases to interest the "general reader." Innumerable missionaries of all sects carry on their work vigorously in Burma. The Americans are chiefly successful amongst the Karens. Burmese are worse to tackle even than Siamese. I came across several parties of the Karen converts in the steamer on the Irrawaddy ; they are trained to sing hymns very sweetly, and the effect is very touching. But I was chiefly interested in the missionary work farther north amongst the wild Kachyns. The American Protestants do it comfortably, keeping schools in Bhamo, and training up the young. The French priests, at least Father Cadoux, the one I knew best, lived entirely amongst the wild natives in the jungle ; he

\* Bishop Vey is still there, or was there last year.

has recently paid the penalty of his devotion with his life. Father Cadoux literally sold all that he had and gave it to the poor. The only thing he kept was a present from his mother in the shape of an old sporting gun. I bought his best gun from him myself for a hundred rupees, fully intending to give it back so soon as solvency should have returned ; but, as he died soon after, I sent it to a Protestant bazaar in Liverpool, as a "gun with a history," to be raffled for:—this was in 1895.\*

In none of the Dutch colonies did I see any missionary work: the Hollanders seem to discourage it, impartially, and of set purpose.

Last of all I spent two years in the island of Hainan. The Catholic mission is Portuguese, and does not succeed very well. The Protestants are Americans and Danes ; their success lies chiefly in the Medical Mission results. I used to see a good deal of both sects.

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### CHAPTER III

#### THE SECOND MANCHU EMPEROR OF CHINA AND FILIAL PIETY

ON the first day of the twelfth moon (about January, 1688) the Emperor K'ang-hi, at the head of the Imperial princes, dukes, and lords, the high civil and military officers of the Court, etc., proceeded on foot to offer sacrifice at the Altar of Heaven. His Majesty had personally composed the following special prayer:—

"The Son of Heaven by succession, a subject, ventures to impart to the High Emperor of August Heaven as follows:—Your subject, under the gracious protection of Heaven, has dutifully served his grandmother, her Majesty the Senior Empress-Dowager, until she was blessed with great age, happily peaceful and healthy. But now she has been suddenly

\* See chapter on "Father Cadoux" in *John Chinaman*.

assailed by an eruptive fever, and during the past ten days has gradually grown worse, in such wise that her life is in hourly danger. Your subject has no peace morning or evening, and has abandoned both food and sleep. He is reverentially busying himself with drugs and medicines, hunting everywhere for suitable prescriptions; so far without satisfactory result, much to the perturbation of the bowels of his compassion. He knows not what to do. He humbly reflects that Heaven's heart is benevolent and loving, casting protection impartially over everything, including her. Moreover, his insignificant person has thus far been the object of her tender nurture. He recalls the fact that he lost his own mother in his earliest youth, and was obliged to fling himself at the knees of his grandmother. For over thirty years she has nourished him and taught him, until at last he attained his prime. Had he been without his grandmother, her Majesty the Senior Empress-Dowager, he most certainly would never have seen the present day of his reign and manhood. His whole life would scarce suffice to requite her immeasurable bounty. In her present condition of extreme danger, the cockles of his heart are overwhelmed with despair. He ventures, therefore, having duly purified himself, to select this day upon which, devoutly placing himself at the head of his ministers, to implore and beseech the Sacred Vault of Heaven, and to humbly crave compassionate notice of his earnest prayer; and that a speedy glance may be bestowed upon her, so that she may soon rise from her dire sickness and long enjoy a hoary age. Should her appointed time be at a close, your subject is willing that his own years should be reduced so as to increase by a few twelvemonths the age of her Majesty the Senior Empress-Dowager. Wherefore now he crouches at the foot of the Altar, and looking upward implores that Mighty Aid, the desire of his heart being altogether beyond his control."

As his Majesty read this prayer, the tears rolled down both his cheeks, and all the princes and ministers assisting at the ceremony were moved to weeping. When the sacrifice was over, his Majesty at once went to the Palace of Tender Peace to attend the sick couch.



With reference to the above prayer, which of course is based upon the ancient Chinese notions of God and Heaven, it will be noticed that both the Supreme Emperor of Heaven and Heaven itself are vaguely assumed to possess a personal character. It is this vagueness which has given rise, amongst Christian missionaries in China, to what is there called the "Term Question," one which has been discussed, often with great acrimony, for many years. Two hundred years ago the Holy Inquisition thus decided the question for the Roman Catholics: "The words *T'ien* and *Shang-ti* must be rejected, and the word *T'ien-chu* [Lord of Heaven] retained in the sense of God." The tabooed words are those used in K'ang-hi's prayer. The Jesuits had obtained from K'ang-hi an explicit statement of the principle under which the Chinese worshipped; and the Emperor declared, with the approval of his learned men, that the duty rendered to Confucius and to deceased ancestors was free from superstition and idolatry of every kind. This conflict between the Pope and the Emperor is really at the bottom of the general missionary question in China; for the Manchu Emperors were exceedingly well disposed towards Christianity until the conflicting "regulars" at Peking began to quarrel among themselves, and until the Popes began to interfere in connection with ancient Chinese customs.

The old Empress (originally only a concubine), who was a Mongol of the Korchin tribe, died a few days later, at the age of seventy-five, and the following was her farewell manifesto. All persons in high office are supposed to leave a testament of this kind behind them, and, in the case of subjects, these are at once forwarded to Peking:—

"I, with my slender share of merit, was invited over to be married by *Divissimus Excelsus*; and *Divus Ornatus*, his son, did me the honour to call me to assist in the duties of a home. A few years later, unhappily, he ascended upon the dragon as a guest on high. In my grief I had no wish to live, and I vowed to die with him. But the princes and ministers, taking into consideration the fact that *Divissimus Origo* was then a mere child, and had no one to take charge of him on his succession to the great heritage, joined in very earnestly begging that I would make an effort to keep alive this my

person. I nourished him and taught him without remissness for nineteen years ; when again misfortune came upon us, and *Divissimus Origo* collapsed and disappeared, grieving my heart to that cruel extent that I had even less desire than before for the things of this world. At the head of my household I cried out to Heaven, with the view of carrying into execution my earlier intent. But the princes and ministers once more represented that his present Majesty had succeeded to the throne as a mere child, and just when he was most in need of nurturing care. They implored me over and over again, and I, looking at the frail orphan, could not bear to abandon him. I made effort to repress my sorrow, and we have clung to each other for months and years. His present Majesty, whose disposition is most piously filial, and who is the most loyal and genuine of men, has personally attended to my food and comfort, morning and evening, without intermission. He has thought of my requirements in every way, so that nothing has been wanting. He has on more than one occasion recommended the assumption of additional honours, which have carried me to the extreme of human greatness. From first to last he has been consistent in all this, well-nigh thirty years. For these reasons I have given respectful care to my own person, and have thus been able to overcome in a large degree the grief and sorrow caused to me by the two deaths. Moreover, her Majesty the Empress-Dowager has rendered to me every careful attention, and my heart is therefore quite at peace. But when I reflect upon the tranquil period which the empire is now enjoying, and the pure filial devotion of the Emperor, so unequalled from ancient times till now, I would fain think I might well endure more happiness. But, alas! the years of my life have passed the appointed time, and the things of this world only leave a sad feeling of emptiness within me. I am now approaching the point of death. The Emperor is personally watching after my medicines, to the abandonment of his own food and rest. He has proceeded on foot to pray for me at the Altar of Heaven, and with thorough earnestness he has cried out and implored on my behalf. But nay, the appointed time cannot possibly be kept back, and the shadow of death is rapidly closing over me. My years are seventy and five, but as I shall soon be

once more at the side of *Divus Ornatus*, my earlier joys will come back to me again ; so why need I regret ? His present Majesty gives the best of his attention to the cares of government, loves and cherishes his people : the world is at peace, and her sons are happy in their vocations : that the rulers and the people of the empire rejoice in the blessings of tranquillity is to be ascribed to the merit of his Majesty's ministers and their counsels ; and when I have gone, may they continue to render equally illustrious service ! But as the filial piety of the Emperor has become a part of his nature, and goes far beyond historical precedent, it is to be feared that his grief may be excessive, and he should therefore moderate his lamentations, giving his first consideration to the multifarious business of state. On the other hand, the civil and military functionaries will severally pay reverent attention to the effective discharge of their own duties, and in no wise disappoint their trusts, all thus contributing to the common expectation of illimitable happiness.

"As to my funeral, everything shall be done in accordance with statutory form. After three days of sackcloth, the Emperor will proceed as usual with public business, and the continuance of mourning will be in accordance with the testamentary commands of *Divissimus Origo* ; that is to say, days will be counted in place of months, and mourning may be discarded after the twenty-seventh day. As to the sacrifices at the Altars of Heaven and of Earth, those to the Ancestral Shrines and Terminalia, it will not do to delay these great functions in any way on account of my poor body. The worship ordinarily offered to all the other spirits will also go on as usual without interruption. Wherefore now this manifesto : let all act in obedience."

A few words in explanation of the above document may not come amiss. The founders and *Reichmehrs* of Chinese dynasties are *divissimi* ; the others only *divi*. In alluding to her own son and grandson, the Empress does not employ capital letters. *Excelsus* founded the Manchu empire, and *Origo* was the first to rule at Peking.

Suttee was disapproved by the Emperor K'ang-hi, who declined to honour the memories of suicide widows ; but recent Emperors continue to patronize the custom, and only

a month or two ago \* the widow of a torpedo-boat captain took poison at Shanghai, and was buried with her husband. To cut out pieces of one's own flesh in order to make therewith broth for a sick parent is considered specially meritorious.

As to the additional honours, after the suppression of the Satrap Rebellion, K'ang-hi declined them for himself, but (as in the somewhat analogous case of Lord Beaconsfield and his wife) conferred them upon his grandmother. The honours in question are such as the present Empress-Dowager of China has received from her son and her nephew (adopted son), the last and present Emperors: they consist in such words as *Pia*, *Felix*, *Amabilis*, *Sedata*, *Pacifica*, *Ornata*, etc.

It will be noticed that the Empress-Dowager, though the wife of the Senior Dowager's son, and the titular mother of K'ang-hi, is honoured with capital letters.

Mourning in China is almost literally sackcloth, but without the ashes; the unbleached garments are not hemmed, and everything worn is of this drab or white colour, free, as far as possible, from stitches, buttons, and elegance of fit. For purposes of mourning, a year is nine months; and three years (twenty-seven months) is the period for a parent or grandparent. Military officers, and in some cases even civil ones (as, for instance, Li Hung-chang),† only retire for 100 days, completing their term at their official posts; but K'ang-hi himself admits that his policy in insisting upon the full twenty-seven months for exalted military officers was in view to prevent their becoming too powerful.

When I was travelling in Sz Ch'wan in the year 1881, the higher in rank of the two Empress-Dowagers died. Neither I nor my servants knew anything of it, until one day they had their hats "blocked" in the streets for not having removed the red tassels therefrom.

The Tartar Emperor whom K'ang-hi selected as a model belonged to a Tungusic race, ancestors in a way of the now reigning Manchus.

The annals go on to say that the Emperor "beat his breast, stamped and roared, calling to Heaven, and knocking his head on the ground, crying without intermission of sound." All this, and the going into mourning of the Court officials,

\* In 1896.

† And more recently Yüan Shī-k'ai.



concubines, etc., is, however, a mere matter of regulation. But K'ang-hi went much farther. Notwithstanding his excessive grief, he discovered one precedent in history for not changing months to days, as had been the practice of Emperors ever since B.C. 200. The Tartar Emperor ruling in North China in A.D. 471-500 expressed a desire to mourn three whole years. K'ang-hi, whilst disclaiming any vain desire to beat the record, considered that, as his own mother died when he was eleven years of age, he ought to mourn twenty-seven months for his grandmother, who had reared him. He offered to free his ministers from all discomfort, and to do it all himself in the privacy of his own rooms. There were many decrees sent down, and many prayers submitted on this subject; but at last the Emperor said: "Our mind is made up: no further representations." Whether it was in irritation at their failure, or what not, the Board of Rites now (evidently on the sly principle, "*Don't* nail his ears to the post, my lads!") memorialized: "Our dynasty in mourning for Empresses has no precedent for cutting off the plaited queue ('pigtail'); besides, her Majesty the Dowager-Empress has passed out commands to the effect that her Majesty the late Senior Dowager-Empress, when sick, said to her: 'If I do not rise from this sickness, the Emperor must positively not cut off his queue,' and it is therefore only proper to pay due attention to these commands." The following decree was received: "Her Majesty the late Senior Empress-Dowager was so very affectionate in rearing Us that We must notwithstanding cut off Our queue." The annals continue: "And his Majesty thereupon cut off his queue."

The Emperor, it is recorded, would neither eat nor drink; not a drop of water touched his mouth for several days; his face grew wan, and he got quite dazed. The Imperial princes remonstrated in a body, but the Emperor explained that "it was the proper thing for a grandson to do," and, after thus speaking, "proceeded to sob more than ever." In a few days the Astronomical Board represented that the last day but one of the year would be a good day for the funeral. But the Emperor would not have that; he wished to be with the corpse a little longer. The Board insisted. The Emperor then said: "Well, then, postpone the funeral three weeks for



me." But no, the Board produced dynastic precedents for not crossing over New Year's Day. The Emperor, whose wits seem to have been all about him, despite starvation and a dazed appearance, wanted to know how this last argument would have worked if his grandmother had died on the last day of the year? He added that the two last Empresses had lain in state for some time, and the Senior Dowager was entitled to at least as much consideration. As to the plea of ill-luck, the Emperor offered to take all the risk upon himself. He said: "Besides, I offered Heaven to shorten my own life to lengthen hers; so why should I be afraid of ill-luck? Moreover, I suspect this belief in luck and retribution is all humbug, and if it fails to do me any personal harm, posterity will be all the wiser for the illustration." After naming the 17th or 18th of the first moon, the Emperor at last made the 11th his irreducible minimum.

The next question was how to get the Emperor to swallow some gruel: the Academy, the six Boards, in fact the whole State, applied itself to the delicate task of getting at least a spoonful down; they also took the opportunity of pointing out the public inconvenience of mourning for twenty-seven months. The Empress's stepmother was called in to assist, and promised not to go back to her own palace until the Emperor had eaten. A decree then announced that, though the Emperor had sipped the gruel, he could not get it down his throat; and, moreover, he positively refused to leave the corpse. Redoubled efforts were now made to get the Emperor back to his palace before the New Year. He inquired: "Is the last day of the year *really* a *dies non*?" After full explanation, the Emperor was asked to consent to take his food on New Year's Day in front of the coffin, and to spend that night at least in a tent outside the building where the corpse lay. The Emperor refused, on the ground that a poor man is obliged to remain in the same house with a coffin, and that an Emperor's feelings of consanguinity are the same as a poor man's. At last, however, yielding to his ministers' solicitations, he consented (but under protest) to leave the coffin for a little time on New Year's Day. Finally, the whole official body "struck work," and demanded punishment for the crime of refusing to consent to twenty-seven

months' mourning. His Majesty at last began to totter under the weight of these repeated blows, and issued a rescript: "Just let this memorial remain with me a while, and address me again after New Year's Day." In compensation for this small concession, the Emperor returned to the body and renewed his wailings harder than ever. Another appeal was made by the ministers to the Empress, who said: "I have twice earnestly exhorted the Emperor, but his mind is made up." And so things went on with wearisome iteration. Up to the fourth moon the Emperor is still found weeping at intervals, and not until the summer does he consent to shave his head and allow the queue to grow again. However, the chief astronomer (a Dutchman), Verbiest, died just about now, and the Russian frontier trouble at Albazin got seriously complicated with the Eleuth and Kalkha Mongol squabbles; the Emperor joined the Dalai Lama of Tibet in an effort to restore peace, and so gradually the memory of his grandmother seems to have faded away. He gave all her clothes, jewellery, and knick-knacks to her relatives, the Korchin Mongols.

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## CHAPTER IV

### LETTER FROM THE EMPEROR OF CHINA TO THE POPE

THE commands to the Faith Regeneration Prince Benedict of the Western Ocean are as follow:

"We have perused the Prince's memorial, and observed the tribute of local objects sent with it, from all of which the genuineness of his devotion is sufficiently manifest.

"His late Majesty the Emperor *Divus Benevolens* [K'ang-hi] extended his protection over the myriad regions; none so distant but what they were reached. When he soared aloft on the Dragon Steed, the ministers and people both of China and of foreign parts felt eternal regrets for his memory. We have now succeeded to the Great Inheritance, and Our most anxious endeavours are to continue the policy indicated by

him. The land of the Faith Regeneration Prince is situated in very remote parts: he has despatched a special envoy to bring a letter submitting his views. He is touched with the grace vouchsafed by his late Majesty, and prays for the long life and happiness of Our Imperial Selves. His supplication is as lucid and to the point as his phraseology is respectful. We approve and are comforted.

"The envoy having come so far, We have treated him with exceptional courtesy. As for the men of the Western Ocean living in China, in Our uniform concern for all creation, We have always admonished them to be quiet and circumspect. So long as they are able to pay due regard to the laws, and their conduct is blameless, We shall of course extend to them Our love, and cherish them.

"As the envoy is now about to return home, this mandate is specially issued. Besides, there are bestowed sixty pieces of satin of the three first qualities, with forty of the second. Accept them, Prince, as a mark of Our attention."

The above document was given out towards the end of 1725. Some time during the late autumn of that year the envoys sent by Pope Benedict XIII. had reached Peking in order to endeavour to appease the Emperor Yung-chêng, who at the commencement of 1724 had issued, and put into strict force, the following edict:—

"The Board of Rites reports upon a memorial sent up by the Viceroy at Foochow, representing that men from the Western Ocean were building chapels all over the provinces of China, and were clandestinely dwelling in them for the purpose of propagating their faith; that men's minds were being gradually misled by it, and that there was no advantage to be gained from tolerating it: the Board advises that, exception made of those brought to Peking to do service [as mathematicians] there, all the other Western Ocean men in the provinces should be settled at Macao; and that, as recommended by the Viceroy, the chapels should all be turned into public offices, those persons who have mistakenly entered the church being strictly prohibited to remain in it. Rescript: Western Ocean men are foreigners, and as such have long lived in the various provinces: the Viceroy in question now recommends that they be removed: it is to be feared that

the people of the localities concerned may mischievously molest them. Let letters be sent to the Viceroy or Governor of each province, ordering them to so manage their removal as to grant a period of a few months or half a year within which the removal must take place. Official escorts must be sent both with those brought to Peking and those quartered at Macao, and care must be taken that they suffer no hardship."

The Catholics, in the official reports they have left on record, admit that Yung-chêng was a wise prince; but it is doubtful if they are all aware that his life was embittered by the evil conduct of four of his brothers, who had already made the old Emperor's life a burden to him. K'ang-hi had disinherited his fifth son, Yün-jêng, usually known as "the second lad"—two out of three elder sons having died young—and who was for many years recognized as heir-apparent, because his mother, who died in childbirth, was the Empress, and not a mere concubine. In consequence of this, the "fourteenth lad" and two other brothers for many years kept up a series of intrigues, and K'ang-hi would never consent to name an heir whilst he lived. Yung-chêng was known as the "fourth lad" until, on his father's death-bed, he was nominated successor, and of course the disinherited clique were jealous of him. But the Emperor was very patient, giving them chance after chance to reform. At last the ex-heir, his elder brother, died, and the treasonable conduct of the other three became so outrageous that two of them were deprived of their liberty, and even their Imperial names, and were forced to assume the plebeian appellations of Akina and Sêsu-hê respectively. They died in prison towards the end of 1726.

What may have specially embittered Yung-chêng against the missionaries is the fact that his brother Sêsu-hê (then called Yün-t'ang), whilst in semi-exile as Generalissimo near Kokonor,\* was caught in the act of corresponding with his friends in Peking through the means of a secret cypher bearing a resemblance to European letters. The missionaries at Peking, when questioned, professed not to be able to decipher the message, but it is evident from the following language of the Emperor that his animus was strong: "Akina (formerly Yün-sz), Yün-t'ang (afterwards called Sêsu-hê), and

\* Prince Twan's present retreat, 1903.

Yün-t'i, having formed a clique with private ends in view, and having given themselves up to circulating mischievous rumours, seem to be carefully showering favours upon priests, taoists, lamas, physicians, astrologers, fortune-tellers, and even play-actors, low policemen, and Western Ocean men, the serfs of high officials, and such-like, with a view to making future use of the acquaintances thus formed, etc., etc." In particular, there was a certain Jean Morão (in Chinese known as Mu King-yüan), who had become intimate with Sêsu-hê, and had been overheard discussing with him, whilst the old Emperor was ill, the prospects of coming to the throne. Jean Morão seems to have followed this prince to Kokonor, and to have arranged (according to the precedent set by Father de Rhodes in Tonquin) a back door or window to his house there, through which the prince could slip out unobserved to take spiritual consolation, or, as the Emperor put it, "to disobey national custom and follow the teaching of outlandish bonzes." Indeed, Sêsu-hê on one occasion announced his intention to renounce a lay life altogether, and he declined to kneel to the Emperor's messengers. Another of the Emperor's relatives, named Sunu, fell into disgrace for similar reasons. Sunu's sons became converts, and it is stated in a public decree, dated 1728, that they vowed to suffer death rather than recant.

In the summer of 1726 another letter arrives from the Pope: "The Western Ocean Italia Kingdom Faith Regeneration Prince Benedict memorializes, begging that, in accordance with the precedent set in the case of Theodoricus Pedrini, the two missionaries imprisoned at Canton may be released." The Emperor's rescript ran: "Theodoricus Pedrini was guilty of transmitting inaccurate messages and making mischievous representations to the throne, in consequence of which his late Majesty, taking into consideration the fact that he was a man from beyond the seas, allotted to him the lenient punishment of confinement. On Our accession to the throne, an edict of indulgence was issued, in which pardon was granted to all pardonable offenders, so as to give them a fresh opportunity in life. Theodoricus Pedrini's offence fell within the scope of this indulgence, and he received his dismissal. But at that time the Canton Government had not



yet included the names of Pi T'ien-siang and Ki Yu-kang\* in the lists submitted under the indulgence. As, however, the prince now makes the request above indicated in his memorial, We order the Canton Government by this special edict to let these two men go, as a mark of Our universal clemency ; at the same time it may be stated that We should in any case have noticed the matter and extended Our imperial favour to them, for it appears their offences fall easily within the rules of Our edict of indulgence."

Although the Emperor Yung-chêng thus dealt calmly and justly with the specific matters brought before him, he was not to be prevailed upon to tolerate Christianity. On the other hand, he was not to be deceived by silly rumours, such as the one that the pretty girls of Peking were being bought up for presentation to the Europeans. The unseemly disputes between the Catholics themselves did not improve matters. Pope Clement XII. declared void the pastoral letters of the Bishop of Peking, and Benedict XIV. by his Bull *Ex quo singulari* drove matters into the *impasse* from which they have never since been able to extricate themselves. No terms with ancestor worship were allowed to be made, and Christianity was in consequence driven to the inaccessible mountains. Both Dominicans and Jesuits were put to death by the Emperor K'ien-lung ; but this did not interfere with the friendly treatment of the mathematicians at Peking. In 1774 the Jesuits there received news that Clement XIV. had abolished the Society of Jesus, so from that moment they had to work as secular priests under the bishop. In 1775 the cathedral was destroyed, but the Emperor K'ien-lung was sufficiently large-minded to sanction and even contribute to its reconstruction ; this new building remained *in situ* until after the Franco-Chinese war of 1884, when Pope Leo XIII. endeavoured to establish better relations with China ; his conciliatory policy at last consented to the removal of the cathedral to a position outside the north gates of Peking ; but he was not politically strong enough to oust France altogether from the political *rôle* she has all along assumed as protector of the Catholic Faith.

\* Note to original Article.—I have not yet been able to ascertain the European names of these missionaries.

## BOOK IV

### *THE IMPERIAL POWER*

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE IMPERIAL MANCHU FAMILY

IT is a sad sight to see a once really noble and courageous ruling house crumble away so utterly as the Manchus threaten to do.\* Although it is well known to what race they belong, and the vicissitudes of that race as a whole are clearly traceable back through many centuries of Chinese history, nothing very specific is recorded of the royal Tungusic tribelet known as "Manchu" beyond the fact that it was one of the petty clan organizations of what we now call Kirin, and that the clan chieftain Nurhachi displayed such extraordinary military talent, that he soon managed to weld a number of cognate clans into a formidable political power. The very name "Manchu" is of obscure if not very doubtful origin, and in the first stages of its appearance it stands for a tiny community which was so ignorant and uncouth that even the personal appellations of the earlier chiefs were unknown to their descendants. Nurhachi died in 1627 at the age of sixty-eight, and his fifth son, Abukhayé, carried on the work of expansion, which culminated in the conquests of Corea, Mongolia, and China; but he also died early, just before the entry of the Manchu troops, under his brother Torkun, into Peking in 1644; and the first real Emperor of China was Abukhayé's son, little more than an infant, who reigned eighteen years, chiefly under the regency of his uncles.

\* Apparently the vigour and sagacity of the Empress-Dowager has secured it a new lease of life.

From that day up to the fatal year 1874, when the eighth Emperor T'ung-ch'ī died childless, the succession has been from father to son without a single break; not necessarily to the eldest, for the second Emperor (1662-1722) had so much trouble with his sons, and the palace intrigues that concentrated round successively designated heirs-apparent were so dangerous, that his successors adopted the ancient Persian expedient of secretly hiding the name of the heir in a casket carefully concealed in an inaccessible spot somewhere in the rafters of one of the inner palace halls. But, notwithstanding, the rule has always been succession from father to son, subject to the reigning Emperor's testamentary choice of sons.

To go back for an instant to the early Manchus: it is interesting to note amongst the leading clan names of A.D. 1600 that of Nala, the present Empress-Dowager's tribe; but the royal Manchu ruling house was surnamed Aisin-Ghioro, which appears to mean "Gold-relatives," the word "gold" perhaps referring to the Gold River at and above Harbin, where the Russians are now fighting,\* the ancient political seat of the most powerful of the Manchu races. Down to this day collaterals of the reigning family write upon their red paper visiting "cards" the Manchu word *Ghioro*, just as the remote descendants in the direct line write the Chinese words signifying "clansman." Thus the now famous Generalissimo Junglu,† about whose vigorous army reorganization so much has been heard, would always sign himself (if in any way related by blood on the male side to the ruling house) as "The Clansman Junglu," or "The Ghioro Junglu." The cards of first-class princes run: "The Agnate Prince Kung;" of the second, "The Fürst Prince Twan," and so on. When Nurhachi began his conquests, the Manchus were not only totally ignorant of letters, but all tradition even of those used by their Imperial ancestors the Gold River dynasty, ejected in A.D. 1200 by Genghis Khan, had totally disappeared; so that Nurhachi and Abukhayē between them had to adopt a modified form of the Mongol which they at first unsuccessfully tried to use, and which in its adapted and improved shape is the Manchu writing of our own time: of

\* Harbin is now a great Russian railway centre.

† Died 1903.

course at that date there was no question of visiting cards or refinement of any kind ; everything had to be learned.

The leading characteristics of the seventeenth-century Manchus were manliness and simplicity. All the Emperors have studiously avoided what may be called "Byzantine" luxury, and the first four were frugal and decidedly economical besides ; they were particularly solicitous not to permit their race to fall into priggish Chinese ways, and more especially not to allow palace eunuchs to hold any effective power. They had always before them the fate of previous Tartar dynasties. The Rev. John Ross, who has lived long amongst and thoughtfully described the Manchus of Mukden, well wrote, exactly twenty-four years ago, words which now sound prophetic :—"The Ming dynasty committed suicide, just as the Daching will, if they permit lawlessness, licentiousness, and corruption to rule their rulers." I may explain that the Ming dynasty was the effeminate eunuch-ridden house displaced by Abakhaye ; and Ta-ts'ing, or "Great Clear" dynasty, is the official designation of the ruling Manchu house, first adopted by him when he decided to pose as an Emperor instead of a mere *han* (Khan). The four first monarchs, and even the fifth to a certain extent, were hunting men ; the periodical battues of big game driven by an army of beaters into a vast enclosure were intended not only for sport, but primarily to keep up the love of a fresh outdoor life, the capacity to take exercise and live on simple food, the courage necessary to face tigers, and so on. I have twice been through the chief hunting-park, which occupies an area between Dolonor and Jêhol almost as extensive as Yorkshire ; but, ever since the accession of the present Emperor's grandfather in 1821, hunting has been abandoned, except mere pic-nic parties in the Peking parks ; Chinese squatters have been allowed to encroach, and most of the game has disappeared. Still, even now, there is a certain air of bluff and booted manliness amongst the best Manchus as compared with the slippered and slippery Chinese, although the fusion has at last become so complete that the Tartar language has disappeared altogether, and it is often difficult to distinguish the one race externally from the other. The present elegant semi-official dress, familiar to most of us through

photographs, consisting of a perfectly plain belted silk gown, with large slits showing black boots, is essentially Manchu (the arrangement of slits is a mark of rank too); and it will be noticed that the princes usually prefer to have their portraits taken without the frippery of hats and feathers. It is difficult to realize that the "pigtail," of which all Chinamen are now so proud—for it really suits them—is a purely Manchu idea, and, together with the Manchu dress (narrow sleeves, etc.), had to be imposed under penalty of death; it was also attempted to prevent Chinese women from squeezing their feet, but that painful luxury was found ineradicable.\*

The only specimens of genuine Imperial Manchus with whose features I am personally acquainted are Prince Tun, the father of the now notorious Prince Twan, and Prince Ch'un, the father of the reigning Emperor. Both are dead now, but both, when I saw them, were walking incognito with some friends in the "Strand" of Peking—a street of book-sellers and sweetmeat shops outside the Tartar walls, in what is known to Europeans as the "Chinese city." It was a fair, or *fête* day, and Prince Tun was engaged in the plebeian amusement of peering into a "French" stereoscopic street stand of doubtful respectability. At that time (1870), neither he nor his brother was of much account, as their nephew T'ung-chi was still reigning, and their brother, Prince Kung (the chief "Foreign Minister"), was the only one of the Imperial family with any shreds of reputation left after the flight of the Emperor Hien-fêng and the peace of Peking. Prince Tun was then colloquially known as the fifth prince, and he was usually spoken of both by Chinese and foreigners as a "beast," for which reason I followed him about to get a good look at him. Prince Ch'un was the "seventh prince," and, so far as I can recollect, was then considered a dullard, or nonentity. Prince Kung was the sixth son of the Emperor Tao-kwang, and Hien-fêng was the fourth. All the princes of the family have a strong family likeness, but it is more marked between the Princes Ch'un and Kung, who probably come of one mother. The chief points are a heavy sensual mouth, with just a suspicion of "underhangedness" about

\* Mrs. Archibald Little has secured the sympathy of many leading Chinese in her crusade against bound feet.



the lower lip, and a decided scowl. Otherwise the faces are not ill-looking, though the expression is imperiously vicious; possibly this evil look is partly owing to a suppressed sense of shame and wrong. On several occasions, when riding in the broad streets of Peking, which are raised causeways considerably above the level of the side-walks, I came across young Manchu princes on horseback surrounded by their retainers. Judging by the picture of Prince Twan I see in some of the illustrated papers, I seem to recognize the face of a young man who once spoke to me pleasantly when I cantered up to him to escape the guards who were officiously trying to edge me down the side. But if that was he, his name was not then Prince Twan, a title he could only bear after his father's death, and he must now be a man of fifty. The son does not necessarily bear a title with a name like his father's title, and the title, apart from its name, is always one degree lower in rank, unless (like Prince Kung's) it is an "irreducible" one (*wang ti*). The Manchu officials one meets in the provinces, usually of high rank, are quite indistinguishable at first sight from Chinese; as a rule, being less literary in their tastes, they are also less *rusés*, and have a little more of what we should call the "bearing of a gentleman" about them; but they are also apt to be more irritable, haughty, incompetent, and indiscreet. I had an Imperial clansman for my teacher at Peking; and two *ghioro* held rather high office when I was at Canton. As a rule, it may be said that all such scions of royalty rather resemble our ideal "mean whites;" and when they do not consort with gamblers and bullies in order to eke out a bare subsistence, their lazy up-breeding turns them into spiritless debauchees, without even the republican sprightliness of the John Chinaman *vulgaris*.

All the Imperial personal names are under strict tabu, and it is quite impossible to ascertain the native Manchu appellations of any of the Emperors; even the word Nurhachi is rarely written or spoken, and in any case he was a mere savage whose name "got out" before he became anybody; not one person in a hundred thousand in China ever heard of the existence of Abukhayé, who is always known as T'ai-tsung, as though we should say *Secundus Divus*. The four Imperial brothers above enumerated, *i.e.* the Emperor Hien-

fêng (a mere date name or reign style, like the papal Pius, Felix, or Leo), Prince Tun, Prince Kung, and Prince Ch'un, are personally called in Chinese, Yichu, Yitsung, Yihin, and Yihwan respectively; but the word *chu* must always be mutilated in writing or in print, as though out of respect for Her Majesty\* we should write V-ctoria or Vict-ia. Nor durst any one except the Emperor, or close relatives in equal or higher degree, even utter the personal names of the princes, let alone write them. All this is in imitation of "Byzantine" Chinese ways, which, however, in this respect, seem to prevail all over North Asia, and may be of older origin than China herself. The Chinese personal names of the Manchu Emperors, beginning with Abukhayé's son, are Fulin, Hüanye, Yinchên, Hungli, Yungyen, Mienning, Yichu, Tsaichun, and Tsait'ien; but I should not advise any one to go crying these sounds about the streets of Peking, unless armed with a knobbed stick. The sensible Emperor K'ien-lung (Hungli) endeavoured to make the indispensable tabu as easy as possible for the "silly people" by changing the sounds of certain syllables, so as not to interfere with the free use of current language; and his successors have gone further, by giving rare and practically meaningless syllables as Imperial names; thus no one in the whole course of his life need ever write the characters *chu*, *hin*, *tsung*, or *hwan*; for no one has the faintest idea what they originally mean, and, if curious, must hunt up in a dictionary to find out. The tabu does not now extend to the first or categorical syllable. All of the generation of Tao-kwang must have names beginning with Mien, and all of the generation of the last two Emperors must in the same way be Tsai. It is exactly as though all our royal family were Athelstanes, Athelhelms, or Athelberts in the generation of George III.; Egberts, Egwins, or Egwolfs in that of the Duke of Kent; and Edmonds, Edreds, or Edwards in the generation of Queen Victoria; and as though we wrote Athelst-n, Egb-t, and Edmond, etc., out of respect for the brother of each generation who was king.

Now the whole dynastic difficulty of our present generation has arisen out of the spiritual fact that, when Tsaichun died,

\* First published in October, 1900.

there was no son to succeed him; if he had had a brother, his brother's son given in adoption would have done very well; however he not only had not a son or a nephew of P'u degree to perform the *sacra*, both private and Imperial, but he had to go back for a heir to his uncles, even to get a Tsai of any kind, not to say a P'u. There are two points upon which I am not certain, as I only paid a cursory passing attention to events at the time, and have left certain documents in China. Some say the young Empress was *enceinte*; but, even if she was, the child might have been a girl, and, in any case, there must have been an interregnum, which, in China, means intrigue and danger all round. The other point is:—Was there any of the P'u category already born to any one whomsoever in 1874? If there were, I presume the grandson of any of the deceased Emperor's uncles would, in the absence of a son or nephew, have been admissible. But even here there were hitches. Prince Tun was no longer the Imperial son of Tao-kwang; he had been given, in 1845, in adoption to that Emperor's childless brother Mienk'ai (Prince Tun), who died in 1838. Moreover, in 1854 and 1856 his brother Hien-fêng had been obliged to censure and degrade him for evil living. The Viceroy Chang Ch'i-tung, one of the most learned men in China, is my authority for the following rule:—"The descendants of Emperors may not perform the Imperial *sacra* in their private capacity; but they may perform the *sacra privata* to the Emperor as their father." Thus the sons of the three Imperial brethren of an Emperor are bound to regard each of their fathers as the head of a new branch, and cannot worship further back than their father's own shrine. But Prince Tun, having been given in adoption to the elder one of that name, was not able to regard even his own father (the Emperor Tao-kwang) privately as such; he had to offer private *sacra* to Mienk'ai. *A fortiori*, his son (now called Prince Twan) must have been excluded from all prospect of the Imperial succession, even if he had then had a son of the P'u category to "trade off." Then, as to the next brother, Prince Kung: I cannot say if at that time his son (of the Tsai category) had already a son of the P'u group; but as the hereditary Prince Kung is now named P'uwei, I suppose either that his father was dead in 1874, or

that the late Prince Kung his grandfather had only then living one son (now dead) to perform his own *sacra privata*. Anyway, the upshot of it all was (and it had to be decided in a few hours) that Prince Ch'un's son, whose mother was a sister of the present Empress-Dowager, was chosen as Emperor. If the generation had been all right, *i.e.* if Tsait'ien, the son thus chosen, had instead had a son elected, all might still have been well, and the spirits could have rejoiced to their hearts' content. But unfortunately "equals cannot sacrifice to equals, nor can a man adopt his equal;" or, as the Romans used to put it, *Qui sibi filium per adoptionem facit, plenâ pubertate præcedere debet*. The only thing, therefore, was to create a precedent; and Chinamen loathe precedents as Anglican bishops loathe genuflexions. It was arranged that Tsait'ien's son (when he should come) should be given in posthumous adoption to Tsaichun. This was very comfortable for Tsaichun (the Emperor T'ung-chi); but how about the Imperial *sacra* of the reigning Emperor Tsait'ien (Kwang-sü)?

These worrying considerations so afflicted the classical mind of a censor named Wu K'o-tuh (1878) that he "worked it all out" in a long memorial, arriving at the total result that the *dii manes* would certainly not tolerate such a job, and that the dynasty must ultimately come to grief. Knowing that "his head and his body would be in different places" if he personally represented this, he sent in his memorial by post (just as Baron Calice sent his card to Prince Ferdinand), and committed suicide, pinning a draft of it either to his coat-tail or to the table-cloth. But he was determined to have some show for his money; being perfectly aware that his paper would be a saleable commodity, and might be ultimately suppressed, he took care to send copies about; and at the time they appeared I published a full translation in the *Hongkong Daily Press*; but I have since lost it, and now only write from memory. Meanwhile, I have no doubt the harassed soul of Wu K'o-tuh is gloating over the success of his predictions; but Tsaichun is still minus his *sacra*, and Tsait'ien can neither produce a son for himself nor for his cousin. The only person who comes fairly well out of it all is the Empress-Dowager, who has at least got an adoptive son in hand to



make up for the natural one deceased; and, unless he dies before her, she thus secures sacrifices to herself and her late husband.

The Dowager-Empress only recently became aware of the fact that the reigning Emperor was unlikely to have descendants of his own, and she was perfectly right, according to her own lights, in trying to find a P'u to make things comfortable for the ghosts of her husband, herself, and her sons. She is certainly not going to murder the son in hand until sure of a spiritual successor to him (which includes to herself). All the gossip about her having assassinated Tsaichun's *enceinte* wife, and having desired to assassinate Tsait'ien, etc., is untrustworthy. No one can see into the villainies of the human heart, and of course all things are possible, in China as elsewhere; but, so far as I can judge, the unfortunate woman has pluckily done the best she can for the dynasty.

As to the claptrap which has been written about the origin of the Empress-Dowager herself, the following is her true official record:—

1854, second moon, decree: The *kwei-jên*, *née* Nala, is advanced to be the *pin* of I.

1856, third moon. Divus Severus, the Emperor Valens, was born; being His Majesty's eldest son. His mother, the *pin* of I, advanced to be *fei* and then *kwei-fei*, was the present Empress-Dowager Ts'z-hi, *née* Nala.

1857, first moon, decree: The *fei* of I is advanced to be *kwei-fei* of I.

Twelfth moon: Special and assistant envoys [named] sent with insignia to patent the *pin* of I, *née* Nala, as *kwei-fei* of I.

In the first place she belongs to the good old family of Nala, and it does not in the least matter whether this is by adoption or not, as stated by some writers, for only Manchus can be adopted by Manchus. But it is not usual to adopt girls, for their destiny is to be given out of the family, and they cannot perform *sacra*; hence girl adoption is rarely desired. Secondly, she began her career, so far as appears from official records, as a *kwei-jên*, which, with the other three titles given, we have, in the absence of suitable English words, to translate "concubine of the 5th, 4th, 3rd, and 2nd rank." But even if she was first a slave, or anything below the fifth rank, that would be no disgrace in a Manchu serving



the Emperor; for it is an honour reserved even for male Manchus of the highest rank (not princes) to call themselves "slave" in addressing the Emperor; few Chinese have the right to do so. The word "concubine" has an objectionable meaning for us, which the Chinese words do not convey; moreover, the Empress Ts'z-an, who was sole Empress when T'ung-chi was born, was herself a *kwei-fei* until 1852, the first wife of Hien-fêng having died, and there being no Empress when he succeeded. The titles appearing under the decree of 1856 are of course anticipatory, for no history of an Emperor is ever composed, or at least published, until that Emperor dies; in the same way Ts'z-hi's name and advancements are in anticipation. I believe (but I do not know) that she and her colleague were made "West" and "East" Empresses in 1858, and only obtained the titles Ts'z-hi and Ts'z-an after Hien-fêng's death.\*

An interesting point has been raised in connection with this extraordinary desire to propitiate the *dii manes* and preserve the continuity of the family, *gens*, or tribe. As a matter of fact, the Manchus have "acquired the taste" for ghosts—it is not a natural love—and it is only their Chinese degeneracy that causes them to lay such stress on the matter. The tombs of Nurhachi and Abakhaye near Mukden are not kept in very good repair, and even the West Tombs of the great Emperors north of Pao-ting Fu are (if, as I suppose, they are kept in condition) left severely alone. It is her own husband (which means also herself) the Empress-Dowager is so anxious about, and for that reason it would be wise to utilize this feeling by occupying her proposed resting-place in the mountain cemetery where her husband and son lie—supposing that she or any of the Imperial princes wickedly detain the persons of our envoys.† With some nations, to pull the nose or the beard is a more deadly insult than to cut the head off. Many persons seem shocked at the idea of desecrating *mausolea*, but are quite ready to demand executions. Surely it is more merciful to (figuratively) pull a man's

\* Both were made Dowagers together on T'ung-chi's accession in 1861.

† Note to original article. Since this was written they have been rescued; but I leave the "principle" on record. Her gorgeous tomb cost nearly a million sterling.

nose than to cut his head off, especially if, by threatening to do so, you can stop him from cutting your friends' heads off? If, in spite of threats, the said man or woman in this case persists in committing a crime against the elementary "law of nations," it is his or her own fault if he or she finds a memorial stone to the victim erected on the top of his own ancestor's or her own husband's grave.

## CHAPTER II

### FROM THE EMPEROR OF CHINA TO KING GEORGE THE THIRD

(Translated from the "*Tung-hwa Luh*," or published Court Records of the now reigning Manchu dynasty.)

"*K'ENG-WU* (day).<sup>\*</sup>—His Majesty proceeded to the Great Pavilion in the Garden of Myriad Trees, where the English Chief Envoy Macartney and the Assistant Envoy Staunton were admitted to Audience.

"*I-mao* (day).<sup>†</sup>—An Imperial order was issued to the King of England in the following terms:—

"So then, thou King, far away over many oceans, thou hast inclined thine heart towards civilization, and hast made a point of despatching envoys to respectfully bear a submissive address. Crossing the seas, they have arrived at Court, and have offered their devout prayers for our Imperial welfare, besides submitting articles of local production, by way of

\* Lord Macartney reached Peking on the 21st of August, 1793, and quitted it on the 7th of October. *K'eng-wu* was the ninth day after the kalends of the eighth moon, and as the Chinese moon is usually one moon behind ours, this would be September, or our ninth moon. As a matter of fact, the 14th of September was the date. The scene was one of the old Cathayan capitals now known as Jêho or Zhehol, which the present translator visited in 1870. The Emperor's tent was placed in the middle of the garden. Jêho is 140 miles north-east of Peking. (See Sir George Staunton's *Embassy to China*.)

† *I-mao* was the ninth day after *K'eng-wu*—i.e. the 23rd of September.

evincing thy heartfelt sincerity. We have opened and perused the address, the language of which is sufficiently honest and earnest to bear witness, O King, to the genuineness of thy respectful submission, and is hereby right well commended and approved. As to the chief and assistant envoys, bearers of the address and the tribute, in consideration of the fatigue they have undergone in carrying out the duties of their distant mission, We, in the exercise of our grace and courtesy, have already commanded our ministers to introduce them to the privilege of audience; have bestowed a banquet upon them; and have conferred upon them repeated gratifications, in order to make manifest our love and tenderness. As to the six hundred or more of officers and menials in charge of the ship, who have returned with it to Chusan, though they have not been to the metropolis, We have also bestowed liberal presents upon them, so that they also may have a rich share in our gracious kindness, and one and all be equal recipients of our benevolence.

“As to the earnest prayer in thine address, King, that thou mayest despatch a man of thine own nationality to reside at the Celestial Court\* and take the management of the commercial interests of thy kingdom, this is quite contrary to the policy of the Celestial Court, and positively cannot be allowed. Hitherto, whenever men belonging to the different States of Europe have shown a desire to come to the Celestial Court and take service there, they have, it is true, been permitted to come to the metropolis. But, once there, they have submitted to the sumptuary usages of the Celestial Court, and have been quartered in the Hall,† never being allowed to return to their own country. This is the

\* Some years previously the Emperor had directed that China be invariably described as the “Celestial Court” in correspondence with barbarians, in order duly to impress them. The Emperor here uses it both in the sense of “China” and of the “Court of China.”

† The Peking church was destroyed by fire in 1775, but the Emperor contributed towards building a new one. The King of France and the Pope, after the abolition of the Society of Jesus, arranged to place the Peking mission under the Lazarists; and Father Raux, the first Superior, arrived in 1784. In Peking the mission is known as “the Hall of the Lord of Heaven.” The “acceptance of service” refers to the geographical, mathematical, and astronomical aid given, in consideration of which the Jesuits and other priests had been allowed to remain in Peking.

fixed rule of the Celestial Court, with which, it is thought, King, thou must be well familiar. But now, O King, thou seekest to depute a man of thine own nationality to reside in the metropolitan city. As such a man would not be bound, like the different Europeans who have accepted service in the metropolis, to refrain from returning to his native land, and as it would be impossible to allow him to move freely to and fro, and to communicate information with regularity, it would really be a profitless business. Moreover, the area under the administration of the Celestial Court is of exceeding vast extent. Whenever the envoys of foreign dependencies arrive in the metropolis, the Interpreters' Bureau cares for their entertainment, and all their movements are regulated by strict etiquette: there is no precedent for their ever having been allowed to do as they like. If thy State were now to leave a man in the metropolis, his language would be as incomprehensible as his attire would appear extraordinary, and there are no quarters suitable for such a case. If, on the other hand, it were proposed to insist on his changing the style of his attire, after the manner of the Europeans who have come to the metropolis and accepted service there, the Celestial Court again would never be willing to force any man's compliance with the unreasonable. Just imagine, if the Celestial Court should desire to send a man to reside permanently in thy kingdom, dost thou think that thy kingdom would be able to accept these commands? Besides, the countries of Europe are very numerous, thy kingdom not being by any means the only one: if all of them were to pray, as thou dost, King, for permission to depute a man to remain in the metropolis, how would it be possible to grant such permission to each one of them in turn? This matter it is most positively impossible to allow. Is it reasonable to suppose that, in order to comply with the request of thee alone, O King, the century or more old customs of the Celestial Court can be altered? If it be argued that thy object, O King, is that he should keep an effective supervision over trade, it may be answered that thy countrymen have engaged in commerce at Macao for a considerable time anterior to the present day, and have invariably been treated with every consideration. Take, for instance, the former missions which Portugal and

Italy\* have in turn sent to Court: they also advanced certain applications on the ground of exercising a supervision over trade. The Celestial Court, noticing their heartfelt sincerity, treated them with the greatest commiseration, and whenever any matter occurred in connection with the commerce of the said countries, the most complete satisfaction was always given. On a former occasion, when the Cantonese hong-merchant Howqua† was dilatory in paying up the price of a foreign ship, the Governor-General under whom the matter arose was ordered to advance the whole of the moneys involved in the first instance from the official chest, and to clear off the debt vicariously, besides severely punishing the defaulting merchant. Probably thy kingdom has heard the facts of this case. Then why should foreign States be so bent on deputing individuals to reside in the metropolis, and make such unprecedented and impossible requests as this? Again, a man residing in the metropolis would be nearly three thousand miles away from the commercial centre of Macao. How would he be able to exercise an effective supervision? If it be argued that it is out of veneration for the Celestial Court, and that it is wished that he should acquaint himself ocularly with the arts of civilization, it may be replied that the Celestial Court possesses a system of rules and etiquette suitable to the Celestial Court, and both of these must be different from those of thy kingdom. Even granting that the person of thy nationality so residing were able to acquire the desired knowledge, thy kingdom naturally possesses customs and regulations of its own, and would never be able to follow those of China; so that, even supposing the person really understood the knowledge thus acquired, he would be unable to make any proper use of it. The Celestial Court conciliates all within the four seas; its only object is to achieve the solid ends of good government; it attaches no value to curious and rare objects of price. But as to the things which thou, O King, hast in this instance sent to us, in consideration of thine honest heart and the

\* Portugal, 1753; the Pope's Legate, Mezzabarba, 1715-21.

† *Howqua* is a "pidgin-English" name borne by the head of the *Ng* or *Wu* family at Canton. *Hong* is a Cantonese word equivalent to the American "store."



great distance they have been carried, We have specially commanded the Government Department immediately concerned to take receipt of them. As a matter of fact, the power and prestige of the Celestial Court is felt far and wide ; innumerable States come to render fealty ; rare and valuable objects of all kinds are ever crossing the seas and accumulating here ; there exists nothing but what We possess it, as your chief envoy and his suite have seen with their own eyes. Still, We never attach any importance to curious and ingenious objects, nor shall We ever again require articles of thy country's manufacture ; so that thy request, O King, that thou mayest despatch a man to reside in the metropolis, is, on the one hand, contrary to the policy of the Celestial Court, and, on the other, would seem to be totally without advantage to thine own kingdom.

"Thou art thus clearly notified of our pleasure, and thine envoys are hereby dismissed and commanded to betake themselves by comfortable stages back to their country. And thou, King, thou shouldst do thy best to realize our Imperial meaning, make still further efforts to prove thy loyalty, and for ever strive to be respectful and submissive, so as to preserve to thy kingdom its due share of the blessings of peace.

"The chief and assistant envoys, the officials below them, the interpreters, escorts, etc., have been granted both rewards in chief and subsidiary rewards according to the list of objects separately drawn up ; and as thine envoys are now about to return home, these our Imperial commands are specially prepared, with presents for thee, O King, of patterned silks and other valuable objects, as by ordinary rule in the first instance ; with, besides, gifts of coloured satins, gauzes, curiosities, and other precious articles, as enumerated in the detailed list. Accept them all, O King, with deference, as a mark of our Imperial love. These our special commands."

A further command runs :—

"Thou King, having yearned from a distance for the civilizing influence, and having most earnestly inclined thyself towards improvement, hast despatched envoys to reverently bear with them an address and tribute, to cross the seas and pray for our happiness. We, observing the honesty of thy

respectful obedience, O King, commanded our ministers to conduct the envoys to the honour of an audience: a banquet was bestowed upon them, and rewards conferred in bounteous plenty. Our commands have already been formally issued to them, and presents to thee, King, have been accorded in the shape of patterned silks, valuable curiosities, etc., by way of manifesting our tender affection.

"But the other day thine envoys raised the question of thy kingdom's commerce, and petitioned our ministers to bring the matter before us. It all involves tampering with fixed rules, and is inexpedient to accord. Hitherto the barbarian ships of the different European States and of thine own kingdom coming to trade at the Celestial Court have always conducted their commerce at Macao. This has continued for some time now, and is by no means a matter of yesterday. The stores of goods at the Celestial Court are plenteously abundant; there is nothing but what is possessed, so that there is really no need for the produce of outer barbarians in order to balance supply and demand. However, as the tea, silk, and porcelain produced by the Celestial Court are indispensable objects to the different States of Europe, and to thy kingdom, for this reason, We have in our grace and commiseration established the foreign hongts at Macao in order that all daily needs may be duly supplied, and every one share in our superfluous riches. But now thine envoys have made considerable demands over and above what is provided by fixed precedent, in such wise as to run seriously counter to the principle of recognizing the bounty of the Celestial Court to distant men, and its nurturing care of the different barbarians. Moreover, the Celestial Court exercises a controlling supervision over all countries, and is benevolent to each in an equal degree. For instance, those trading in Canton province do not come from the kingdom of England alone: if they were all to come clamouring in the same way, and wantonly to pester us with requests impossible to concede in this style, is it to be supposed that We could always go out of our way to grant them? Remembering, however, that thy kingdom occupies an obscure corner in the distant wilderness, and is far removed from us by ocean upon ocean; also that thou art naturally unversed in the political etiquette

of the Celestial Court, We for this reason commanded our ministers to make all this plain to thine envoys, instruct their minds, and dismiss them back to their country. But, fearing that thine envoys on their return home may fail to represent matters thoroughly to thee, We again take up their requests one by one, and prepare these further commands for thy particular instruction, opining thou wilt be able to grasp our meaning.

"1. Thine envoys state that the merchant ships of thy kingdom would like to come and anchor at Ningpo, Chusan, Tientsin, and Canton for purposes of trade. Now, hitherto the traders of the European States who have set out for places under the Celestial Court have always found the foreign hong at Macao available for them to discharge and ship their goods. This has continued so for a long time, and thy kingdom amongst the rest has complied with the rule for many years without a single contrary word. At neither Tientsin in Chih Li province nor at Ningpo in Chêh Kiang province have any foreign hong been established, and any ships of thy kingdom proceeding thither would fail to find the means of disposing of their produce withal. Besides, there are no interpreters at these places, and no one would be able to understand the language of thy kingdom. Thus there would be many inconveniences. Apart, then, from the port of Macao in the Kwang Tung province, where trade will continue to be permitted on the old lines, the various prayers of thine envoys that ships may be allowed to anchor for purposes of trade, whether at Ningpo, Chusan, or Tientsin, can in no sense be entertained.

"2. Thine envoys state that it is desired to establish a separate hong in the metropolitan city of the Celestial Court, for the storing and distribution of produce, after the manner and precedent of Russia, a request which it positively is, even in a greater degree than the first, quite impossible to grant. The metropolitan city is the cynosure of the empyrean for all parts of the world: its etiquette is as severely exact as its laws are of striking majesty; never has there been such a thing there as the establishment of mercantile hong by foreign dependencies. Thy kingdom has hitherto traded at Macao, partly because Macao is comparatively near to the

seaports, and partly because it is the commercial emporium of all nations, access to and departure from which are very commodious. If a hong for the distribution of merchandise were to be established in the metropolitan city, thy kingdom is situated at such a very great distance to the north-west of the metropolitan city that the conveying thither of produce would, besides, be very inconvenient indeed. Formerly the Russians established a trading office in the metropolitan city because this was anterior to the organization of Kiachta ; but they only had houses temporarily given to them to reside in. Afterwards, when Kiachta was established, the Russians did all their trading there, and were no longer allowed to reside in the metropolitan city ; and this has been so now for some score or more of years. The Russian trade which now goes on at the Kiachta frontier is, in fact, analogous to the trade of thy kingdom at Macao. As thy kingdom already has foreign honges for the distribution of produce at Macao, why must thou needs wish to establish another hong in the metropolitan city ? The boundaries of the Celestial Court are defined with absolute clearness, and never have individuals belonging to outer dependencies been allowed to infringe the frontiers or mix with our people in the least degree. Thus the desire of thy kingdom to set up a hong in the metropolitan city positively cannot be granted.

"3. Thine envoys state again that they desire a small island, somewhere about the Chusan group, so that merchants can go thither and make it a resting terminus for the convenience of receiving and warehousing produce. Now, the desire expressed by thy kingdom for permission to reside at Chusan comes from the wish to distribute the merchants' produce. But, as Chusan possesses no foreign honges, and has no interpreters, no ships of thy kingdom have, so far, gone thither ; and thus the desire of thy kingdom to possess the island in question is a futile one. Every inch of land under the Celestial Court is accounted for in the official survey ; the boundary marks are strictly laid down, and even islands and shoals must be considered from this frontier point of view, each belonging to its proper jurisdiction. Moreover, thy kingdom of England is not the only one amongst the outer barbarians which turns towards civilization



and trades with the Celestial Court. Were other States to come clamouring in the same way, and each beg for a gift of land for the occupation of its traders, how would it be possible to grant the petition of each? Besides, the Celestial Court has no precedent for such a course, and therefore it is inexpedient in a yet greater degree to grant this request either.

"4. They say once more that some small place in the neighbourhood of the provincial capital of Canton might be set apart for the barbarian traders of thy country to reside in; or, as an alternative, that those persons residing at Macao might be allowed to travel backwards and forwards at their convenience. Hitherto the barbarian merchants of the different European States, residing for purposes of trade at Macao, have had the boundary-line marked out clearly for them, and have not been allowed to transgress it one single foot or inch; nor have the barbarian traders resorting to the foreign hongs to dispose of their goods been permitted to take upon themselves to enter Canton, the object of all this being to check the rise of disputes between the people and the barbarians, and to set a great barrier between China and Abroad. The request now made that a separate place near Canton may be set apart for the residence of the barbarian merchants from thy kingdom is thus, in the first place, contrary to the precedents which have up to this time governed the barbarian merchants of Europe residing at Macao: moreover, the different European States have traded in Kwang Tung province for a great many years, and have accumulated great profits: they come in daily increasing numbers: how, then, would it be possible to set apart a separate piece of land for the residence of each? As to barbarian merchants moving to and fro as they may list, it is for the local officials, assisted by the Chinese hong-men, to institute inquiry as each case may seem to require. If no bounds of any description were set, it is to be feared that the people of the interior might from time to time get into disputes with the barbarian merchants of thy kingdom, which would have results very far from the commiseration intended. Taking into consideration, therefore, the requirements of the case, We must declare for residence at Macao, in accordance



with established practice, as being the only satisfactory and desirable course.

"5. Again, they say that the barbarian merchants of the English kingdom might proceed from Canton down to Macao by the inner reaches, and their goods might either pay no taxes at all, or reduced taxes.\* Now, there are fixed tariffs governing all cases connected with the payment of duties by barbarian traders moving to and fro, and in this regard all the nations of Europe are upon the same footing. Just as it would not do at the present time to charge the ships of thy country any excess over the tariff because they happen to be the most numerous, so is it inexpedient to make an exception in favour of thy country by reducing the duties payable by it alone. The only course is to charge a just levy in accordance with the existing practice, and on the same footing as the other countries. Henceforth the barbarian merchants of thy State proceeding with their produce to Macao must receive every attention as before, in order to manifest due commiseration for them.

"6. They next apply that the ships of thy kingdom may pay duties in accordance with a tariff. Now, the Hoppon of Canton in levying tonnage dues† has hitherto acted under a fixed tariff; and, as it has now been declared inexpedient to establish trading honges at any other seaports, it follows that duties must be paid as before, in accordance with precedent, to the Hoppon of Canton, and that there is no necessity for any further notification on the subject. As to the Teaching of the Lord of Heaven‡ cultivated by thy kingdom, this is simply the teaching which has up to this time been cultivated by the different nations of Europe. The Sacred Emperors and Illustrious Kings of the Celestial Court have, ever since the creation of the world, handed down the teachings which they have instituted from time to time; the earth's millions have a standing guide provided for them to follow herein,

\* Probably this refers to re-exports to unsold cargoes. The Emperor, like all Chinese, shows acuteness in evading the main point and betaking himself to generalities.

† "Ships' materials" are the actual words used, but a single extra dot (probably accidentally omitted) transforms these into "ships' dues."

‡ This term is now usually confined to the Roman Catholic faith; "Jesus teaching" is the common expression for "Protestants."

and would not venture to befool themselves with outlandish doctrines. So far as the European men who have accepted service in the metropolis are concerned, they reside in the Hall, and are not allowed to form connections with the people of China, or to wantonly propagate their faith. The distinction between Chinese and barbarian is strictly maintained. The desire which thine envoys now express is that barbarian men may be allowed to preach their faith as they list, which is even more impossible to grant than anything else.

“The above categorical homily is forthcoming in consequence of the wanton suggestions made by thine envoys. Thou, King, maybe, hast not been able to thoroughly comprehend the political principles of the Celestial Court, and hadst no idea of wanton intrusion thyself. In all cases where tributary kingdoms with honest heart turn towards civilization, We invariably display our commiseration, in order to make manifest our tender affection. Should they crave any matters from us which do not conflict with our political principles, in all cases We go out of our way to grant their requests. Moreover, in thy case, O King, residing as thou dost in an obscure spot across the oceans, having protested thine earnestness and paid thy tribute, We have conferred upon thee rich favours in double the measure of other countries. But the requests now submitted by thine envoys not only seriously concern the statutory rules of the Celestial Court ; they are all quite futile and impracticable even in thine own interests. We now once more set forth our meaning for thine instruction, O King, who shouldst enter into our views and for ever render obedience, thus enjoying thy due share of the blessings of peace. If, after this clear declaration, thou, King, shouldst peradventure lend misguided ear to the words of the men under thee, and allow barbarian merchants to go with their trading ships to Chêh Kiang, Tientsin, etc., and seek to land there for purposes of trade, know thou that the statutory rules of the Celestial Court are very strict, and that the civil and military officers in charge of each place will do their duty faithfully, and will not allow any ships of thy kingdom proceeding thither to remain there, but will positively have to drive them away at once to sea, so that the barbarian merchants of thy kingdom will have all their trouble in vain.

Say not thou wast not warned! Tremble and obey, without negligence, this further command!"

"*Jên-yin* (day).\*—Rescript to the Cabinet Council:

"Chu Kwei† has sent up a memorial reporting that England has submitted an address with tribute. As certain tribute envoys in previous years had arrived in the metropolis and received handsome rewards from us, the King in question has specially prepared an address, with articles of local origin as tribute, for submission to us. His heartfelt sincerity is sufficiently manifest, and although no special envoy has come to Canton for the above purpose, on what ground should there be any difficulty about vouchsafing acceptance?

"An Imperial order‡ is also issued commanding him in the following words:—

"Thy kingdom lying far away as it does across repeated oceans, last year thou sentest envoys to reverentially bear an address with tribute, to cross the seas, and pray for our happiness. We, observing thy heartfelt earnestness, O King, ordered our ministers to admit them to the privilege of audience, bestowed a banquet upon them, and conferred rewards in bounteous abundance. We issued a formal decree of commands for them to take home with them, and presented thee, O King, with patterned silks and valuable curiosities, in order to make manifest our tender affection. Now, O King, thou hast once more prepared a submissive address with local articles, which thou hast sent by barbarian ship to Canton for submission to us. The honesty of thy reverent submission is sufficiently obvious. The Celestial Court holds in conciliatory possession all the States of the world. We reckon not of the gifts of jewels which come to our Court: what We value is the senders' honesty of purpose. We have, however, commanded our viceregal authorities to admit the objects in question, in order to allow free scope to thy devout respect.

"As to the punitive expedition which the Celestial

\* *Jên-yin* is the twenty-fourth day after the kalends of the twelfth moon in the sixtieth year of the Emperor K'ien-lung; five days later he abdicated. This would be early in February, 1796.

† Chu Kwei was viceroy at Canton.

‡ This Emperor often drafted the replies which his officers were to send, and even told them to say, "We dare not trouble the Emperor about this matter."

Court some time ago despatched against the Ghoorkas, the generalissimo commanding-in-chief penetrated deeply into their country at the time, capturing successive strong points. The Ghoorkas, awe-stricken before our military might, came cringing in to offer submission, and it was then first that the generalissimo reported the condition of affairs to us.\* The benevolent goodness of the Celestial Court extends far away over both China and Abroad in equal measure. Unwilling that the poor folk of that region should one and all come to annihilation, We for this reason consented to receive their submission. At that time it is true the generalissimo did allude in his report to the fact that thou, King, hadst sent an envoy to Tibet to proffer a petition, stating that thou hadst exhorted the Ghoorkas to make their submission. But the great results of our victory had then already been achieved, nor was there ever any need to trouble the military power of thy kingdom. In thy present address, O King, it is stated that this affair occurred after the last envoys had started on their journey hither, and that therefore they had not been able to report it to us ; but it is evident thou art ill acquainted with the sequence of events. Still, as thou, O King, appearest able to understand the principles of right, and art reverently submissive to the Celestial Court, We readily accord our commendation and approval, and now make thee, O King, special formal gifts of embroidered satins, etc. On thy part, O King, make further efforts in devoted loyalty, and ever merit our imperial favour, thus giving effect to our high desire that even the most distant may participate in the soothing influence of our benevolence.'

"When Chu Kwei shall have received the above document, he will at once proceed to deliver it to the *taipan*† Brown belonging to the said country for further transmission by

\* The *Annals of the Manchu Wars* distinctly states that "in 1795, when the English envoy came to Peking [inaccurate, of course] with tribute, he said: 'Last year but one, your general led his troops into the Timi country south-west of Tibet, and on that occasion we aided you with gunboats. Should you hereafter desire the use of European troops, we offer you our services.' It was only then that the Emperor became aware that, when the Ghoorkas submitted, it was because they were menaced also on the south."

† *Taipan* is a Cantonese word meaning "partner" or "head of a commercial house," but referring solely to Europeans. The Hoppo—a "pidgin-English" word—is the Comptroller of Customs.

him back to his country, so that the King in question may be still further filled with grateful obligation and reverent submission, and our affectionate tenderness be thus made manifest.

"The rule is that officials of the Celestial Court may not have any truck with outer barbarians. Chu Kwei therefore did right to give him orders to take back the objects presented to the former Viceroy and the Hoppo."

N.B. (*to original article*).—In all the above papers there are words which do not admit of exact translation. For instance, the word translated "barbarian" cannot possibly be accurately rendered: it is rather "outlandish" or "strange," having in it at the same time that suspicion of inferiority which is wrapped up in the vague English word "natives" as opposed to genuine white men, or in the American expression "coloured folk." The use of "thou" denotes unmistakable inferiority. Such words as "order," "submissive address," "policy," "etiquette," "commiseration," "civilization," "devout respect," "imperial commands," and "tender affection," are susceptible of many turns and shades in translation. However, the rendering is word for word and literal throughout, so far as the Chinese language admits of it.

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### CHAPTER III

#### THE EMPEROR OF CHINA AND LORD AMHERST

IN view of the recent interview between Prince Henry of Prussia and the Emperor of China, it is curious to recall the very different reception accorded to Lord Amherst by the present Emperor's great grandfather, usually known as Kia-k'ing, eighty-two years ago.\* The story is best told in his Majesty's own words:—

\* Written in 1898.



"Bestowal of the following mandate upon the King of Ying-ki-li:—

"Thy kingdom far away across the oceans proffers its loyalty and yearns for civilization. Formerly in the 58th year of K'ien-lung (1793), when the late Emperor, his exalted Majesty Divus Purus, was on the throne, thou didst despatch an envoy across the seas to Our court. On that occasion the envoy of thy kingdom most respectfully fulfilled the rites and failed not in form, for which reason he was enabled to bask in the Imperial Favour and to enjoy audiences and banquets, rich presents besides being conferred upon the mission. This year, O King, thou hast again sent an envoy to be the bearer of an address and to deliver thy *quantum* of local articles. We, in consideration of the fact that thou, O King, wast genuine in thy respectful submission, felt deeply overjoyed, and, following up the old precedents, commanded the official body to arrange for audiences and banquets, so soon as the envoy of thy kingdom should arrive, entirely in accordance with the rites of the last reign. As soon as ever thine envoy arrived at Tientsin, We commanded officers to proceed to that place and confer upon him a banquet there. But lo! when thine envoy came to render thanks for the feast he did not observe the proper ceremonial forms. We, holding that the petty subject of a distant kingdom might well be excused for his ignorance of forms, gave special commands to certain great officers that they should, just as thine envoy was approaching the capital, inform him to the effect that in the 58th year of K'ien-lung thine envoys, when saluting, in each case knelt down and *kowtowed* in due form, and to explain how impossible it was to make any alteration in the present instance. Your envoy verbally told Our high officers that when the day should arrive he would duly carry out both the kneeling and the *kowtow*, and that there would be no failure in form. Our great officers then made representations to Us to this effect, and We thereupon announced Our pleasure, directing that thine envoy should have audience on the 7th day of the 7th moon (26th August), and that presents and a banquet should be bestowed on the following day in the *Chêng-ta Kwang-ming* Hall; food being again conferred in the *T'ung-lo*

Garden. Leave was to be taken on the 9th, and on that day a trip to the *Wan-shou* Hill (part of the Summer Palace) was to be granted. On the 11th, presents were to be distributed at the *T'ai-ho* Gate, and then the party were to adjourn to the Board of Ceremonies for a banquet. On the 13th they were to be dismissed, and Our great officers had given thine envoy full information as to the forms and the dates. On the 7th, the day fixed for the audience, thine envoy had already got as far as the gate of the palace, and We ourselves were about to mount the throne, when the chief envoy suddenly announced that he was very ill and unable to walk. We, holding it quite possible that the chief envoy should be suddenly taken ill, then ordered that the assistant envoys alone might be admitted. But the two assistant envoys also declared that they were in a suffering condition, a piece of impoliteness it would be impossible to exceed. We did not, however, visit upon them seriously Our displeasure, but that very day dismissed them back to their country, and as thine envoy never obtained an audience, it follows that neither could thine address, O King, be handed in, and that it remains in thine envoy's hands to be carried back. However, reflecting that thou, O King, hast submitted an address and offered presents, We opine that thine envoy's want of respect in proceeding to give interpretation to thy genuine feelings, is the fault of thine envoy; the respectful submissiveness of thyself, O King, this We right well discover, for which reason We make a point of selecting from amongst the tribute articles some maps, pictures, views, and images, which We retain in commendation of thy loyal heart; this being equivalent, in fact, to accepting the whole. We also present thee with a white jade 'As you like it (*i.e.* a sceptre);' an official chaplet of kingfisher jade; two pairs of large belt purses and eight small ones, as a mark of Our tenderness. As thou art removed exceeding far from the Central Flowery Land, and thy sending envoys over this great distance is no easy matter; moreover, as thine envoy has not been able to adequately acquaint himself with the ceremonial observances of China, thou wilt not hear with pleasure of these divers discussions and argumentations. The Celestial Dynasty sets no value upon distant things, and does not regard as rare or

precious objects any of the ingenious curiosities of thy land. Thou, O King, maintain harmony amongst thy people, and sedulously strengthen thy domain, treating alike the distant and the near; that is what best secures Our commendation. Henceforward no more envoys need be sent over this distant route, as the result is but a vain waste of travelling energy. If thou canst but incline thine heart to submissive service, thou mayest dispense with sending missions to court at certain periods; that is the true way to turn towards civilization. That thou mayest for ever obey We now issue this mandate.

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“Commands. When in the present instance Ying-ki-li country sent tribute, and the envoy landed on his arrival at the seaport of Tientsin, We specially commanded Sulenge and Kwang Hwei to signify our pleasure and confer a banquet, directing him, when the time should arrive for acknowledgments, to go through the form of thrice kneeling and nine *kowtows*, and if duly performed conducting him to Peking. Supposing he were unversed in the forms of etiquette, representations were to be made, pending Our pleasure; the boats in which he travelled were not to be allowed to sail away, but he was to return by the same route to Tientsin, and thence by sea to his country. But Sulenge and Kwang Hwei have deliberately disobeyed the Imperial commands and brought him straight on towards Peking; they have, moreover, allowed the boats to go away on their own account; it is in this that their blame lies. But things having thus gone wrong, We once more commanded Hoshitai and Muktenge to go and meet the mission at Tung-chow, in order to rehearse the ceremonies. The limit of time was fixed at the 6th day of the 7th moon, and if by this date forms had been complied with, the mission was to be brought on further. But if up to that date forms had not been complied with, a report of impeachment was to have been sent impending Our pleasure. On the 5th Hoshitai and Muktenge sent up an evasive report, and on the 6th they brought the mission right on. At half-past one p.m. on that day We seated ourselves in the *K'in-chêng* Hall to give audience to the pair, and first enquired of them how the rehearsal had gone off. Taking their hats

off and knocking their heads on the ground, they replied that there had been no rehearsal. Then We asked them how it was, if there had been no rehearsal, that no report of impeachment had been sent in. Hoshitai said: 'When they have their audience to-morrow they will certainly conform.' It is in this again that their blame lies. After early breakfast at half-past six on the morning of the 7th, We signified our intention to mount the throne and give audience to the mission. Hoshitai first represented that 'the mission could not come along so quickly, but that on its arrival at the Gate he would ask further instructions.' Then he represented that 'the chief envoy was suffering from dysentery, and a little more time was wanted.' Finally he represented that 'the chief envoy's sickness had caused him to collapse, and he could not appear in audience.' To this We replied that the chief envoy might return to his lodging, where medical attendance would be supplied for him; meanwhile the assistant envoys might be ordered in. The last representation then was that 'the two assistant envoys are both ill too, but as soon as the chief envoy is perfectly well, they will have audience along with him.'

"China is overlord of all under Heaven, and it is impossible to meekly tolerate this supercilious insolence. Hence We have sent down Our pleasure, expelling the envoy in question back to his country, but not otherwise punishing his grave offence. Kwang Hwei was at the same time commanded to escort him to Canton to take his ship there. Since then We have learnt from other officers of the court, who have been admitted to audience, that the envoys travelled from Tungchow right up to the palace waiting-room during the night, and that the envoy stated his uniform was behind, and would not be here just yet, adding that it was impossible to see the Great Emperor in his ordinary attire. How was it Hoshitai did not represent these facts to Us at Our interview with him? And if he forgot, why did he not make a supplementary representation later on? Or do it early the next day? Any of these courses would have sufficed. But not to have represented the facts at all up to the very moment of Our taking Our seat, places the offence of the pair in a graver category even than that of Sulenge. If they had represented in time We



should have fixed another date for the audience, from which the envoys could then have retired, feeling that everything had gone off in due form. Who would have thought that stupid ministers could bungle matters to this degree? We really have no face to confront Our courtiers withal, and there is nothing for it but to accept a share of the blame Ourselves. The offences of the four individuals in question will be dealt with as soon as the Board reports upon their deserts. Meanwhile We first signify this Our pleasure for the general information of all, here or in the provinces, including the Mongol princes and dukes."

Later on the Board advised, and his Majesty's pleasure ran:—"Sulenge is deprived of his presidency of the Board of Works and of his Captain-Generalship of the Red Chinese Banner; but as an act of grace he is given a third button, and will fill the lower office of Assistant-President to the same Board" (the other three ditto, *mutatis mutandis*).

About the 20th of November the following decree was issued:—

"To the Cabinet Council. Tsiang Yu-t'ien and colleagues report the steps taken in connection with the arrival of the Ying-ki-li tribute envoys at Canton and their return home. As the Ying-ki-li tribute envoys are unable to carry out the 'thanking for banquet' forms; and as in the 58th year of K'ien-lung (1793) no banquet was given to the (Macartney) mission on its arrival at Canton, there was of course no occasion in the present instance to force a banquet upon them. The action of the viceroy and his colleagues, as now reported by them, in conferring upon the envoys three tables laid out with dinner, and also presents of sheep, oxen, etc., was highly proper. But touching the postscript, advising that another Imperial decree should be issued, setting forth in clear terms the serious want of politeness on the part of the said envoys, and leaving the punishment of them to the king of the said country, this is entirely unnecessary. As to the proclamations which the viceroy reports he has had prepared for issue to the trading ships of the said nation coming to Canton, We adopt the (Confucian) view: 'Mark, but do not talk about things beyond our ken,' and We had already directed that no further steps be taken. Evidently the viceroy



had not received the decree to this effect when he made these further representations.

"To sum up. This matter was first of all bungled by Sulenge, and then a second time by Hoshitai. We on Our part have weighed the whole circumstances, administered a due admixture of kindness and severity, made return in excess of receipts, and in short done all that it was meet to do, so that the matter may now be allowed to drop. As the envoy has displayed such knavish deceit, even if an Imperial decree were issued as advised, when he should get home he would of course conceal or distort the facts and concoct a story so as to gloss over his own blunders ; thus the most dignified course is to let the whole matter slide.

"When the tribute envoys reach Canton, the viceroy in receiving them should read them a solemn lecture to the effect that their failure to carry out the proper forms, whilst charged with their sovereign's commands to come to the Celestial Court with tribute, is entirely their own fault ; but that his Majesty the Emperor in his benevolence and magnanimity, has refrained from chastising them, and has even deigned to accept some of their king's tribute, and to distribute objects of value in return ; that this is grace commensurate with the height of Heaven and the depth of Earth ; that when they return home they must not fail to feel grateful. Add that 'your country has hitherto traded at Canton, which therefore is the port fixed for your country. If in future there are any more tribute missions, they must invariably anchor at Canton, and there await the result of the report to Peking of the viceroy and the governor ; they must not go on to Tientsin ; and if they do so, the authorities there, in obedience to Imperial commands, will reject their advances ; which of course means that your people will have all your travelling for nothing.'

"If clear commands are set forth to them in this fashion, they will naturally experience a sense of fear and gratitude combined, and there is no need to enter into any discussion of right or wrong with them.

"We have further reflected that when Ying-ki-li sent tribute in the 58th year of Kien-lung, application was made for permission to trade at Ningpo in Chêh Kiang province. But in the present instance their tribute ships, in going and

coming, passed Chêh Kiang without dropping anchor there. This looks as though they had a special eye on Tientsin for trade, so as the better to carry out their monopoly schemes. The viceroy must, under no circumstances, fail to discourage them from coming to Tientsin, and thus nip that idea in the bud, making it clear that even if they do go there, they will not be able to get their messages through. As to Poson (? Porson) and the other four, as they are all barbarian traders, and as the country in question is still allowed to trade, of course it is unnecessary to drive them all out, and thus rouse their suspicions, so that they can be allowed to remain if they like, as the viceroy suggests."

## BOOK V

*THE FOREIGNER IN CHINA*

## CHAPTER I

## LIFE IN CHINA

SEVERAL friends have lately asked me if a married lady can safely go to China, if the climate is very deadly, if the people are very dangerous, and so on. To all such questions it would be possible to give a set of correct answers which would, at the same time, be diametrically opposed to each other. It must be remembered that China is as big as Europe; that Chinese towns with European settlements attached differ very much from those consisting of exclusively native populations; that the climate of Peking is as different from that of Canton as that of St. Petersburg or New York is from the climate of Havana; that the appearance and the disposition of the people of each province vary as much as they do in the different countries of Europe—indeed, the Chinese regard us “Westerners” as being of one pale-faced or “devil” race, with slight local variations;—and that whilst in some places a steamer arrives or leaves nearly every hour, at others there is a solitary visit perhaps once in ten days; or, if the “port” is an inland or riverine one, no news may come from the outer world except that conveyed by coolie, chair, or native boat. For instance, the port of Wênchow, though on the coast, is still\* without a telegraph line; and when the great riot took place in 1884 the victims had to wait for the fortnightly steamer to take them away.

The happy hunting-ground of European ladies is, of course, Shanghai, and in appearance the “settlements” are a

\* Remedied, I believe, this year (1903).

cross between Nice and Odessa, except that, instead of being on the sea, Shanghai is on a river. Yet this river is so broad, the promenades are so extensive and unobstructed, that, in spite of this difference, the feeling of airiness and expansiveness is greater in Shanghai than in either of those European cities. It is quite possible to spend one's whole life in Shanghai, driving or walking in half a dozen different directions four or five miles every day, without seeing any more of native Chinese squalor than one sees of genuine Turkish life at Constantinople (Pera), Burmese life at Rangoon, Arab life at Alexandria, or Greek life at Athens; which in each case is very little, if we take as a standard the primitive existence of the natives, apart from foreign immigration, machinery, hotels, newspapers, railways, and *fin de siècle* luxuries generally; which, after all, are only a thin veneer of progress found in the large towns.

Shanghai is in the shape of a horseshoe, the apex being the British and French settlements to the west, the open part being the river as it flows out to the sea at Wusung, a dozen miles off; the north shank, the American settlement; and the south shank, the native walled city and junk anchorage, near which very few white people ever go, except on official business, or out of curiosity. A river, running from west to east, commonly known as the Soochow Creek, divides the British from the American settlements, and is crossed by six or seven bridges, each one several hundred feet or yards apart from the next. The British settlement, again, is divided off from the French to the south by a narrow creek called the Yang-King Pang, which is likewise crossed by six or seven bridges. A third creek, still farther to the south, divides off the French settlement from the odoriferous native city; there are only four bridges, and at good distances apart, which, in so far as it is an arrangement calculated to make sudden raids difficult, is a highly desirable one. At a distance of about one mile west from the river there is a fourth watercourse, crossed by eight bridges, called Defence Creek, running north and south, and connecting the three others. The English and French settlements united thus occupy a strong strategical position for defence, and together form what may be called an irregularly-shaped island, roughly

one mile square, or rather two islands, of which the oblong British absorbs three parts, and the narrow French one part, of the total mile area. These two settlements together engross practically the business part of Shanghai, in the same sense that the City of London forms the business nucleus of the Metropolis.

The American settlement of Hongkew is four miles long by an average of half a mile deep; but only one-sixth of it—the section adjoining the British settlement—is laid out in cross streets, and thickly built upon; but there is a second-class and temporary air about most of the buildings, with the exception of the Japanese, German, and United States consulates. The greatest part of it still consists of Chinese market gardens, and one long road—an excellent drive—runs to the “Point.”

The opposite bank of the river, called Pootung, may be taken to represent that part of the hoof enclosed by the horse-shoe. It is little visited by foreigners other than those concerned in the various works established there.

Far away west from the British and French concessions stretches what may be called suburban Shanghai, which extends as far as the enormous Jesuit establishments of Siccawei. This space is taken up by the race-course, gardens, and villa residences, and may be compared with the environs of Manchester, Leeds, Birmingham, or other such busy English towns, except that there is just a touch of the cheap, the temporary, and the American about everything, as though things were not intended “to stay” so permanently as is the case with solid old England.

The designers of the settlements made the fatal mistake of underestimating the future development of Shanghai, and the result is that the streets are all far too narrow for their work, always excepting the magnificent “Bund” or Praya, a broad parade flanked with palatial “hongs” on the land side, and with green grass and gardens on the river-side; it is always full of life and activity, on account of most of the large local steamers sweeping past it at all hours of the day. The wealthy Chinese are only too eager to dwell in the foreign settlements, where they can enjoy a comparative immunity from “squeezes,” freely expose their wealth and their women,



and indulge in every species of barbarian novelty without risk of interference. In the native city there is no space for carriages of any kind, nor are the streets clean enough or broad enough to permit of women gadding about, even supposing that the *pardah* customs (as they say in India) of the natives were not against such a display. But one of the gayest sights in the world is the Maloo, or chief road leading through the British settlement to Siccawei, on an afternoon, when landaus, broughams, cabs, jinrickshas, barrows, cavaliers, all go spanking along in the bright sunshine in wild and picturesque confusion. The rich "compradores" and "shroffs" bring with them their whole harems, grandmothers, daughters, nurses, and womankind generally, decked out in the most gorgeous of silks and satins, glossy black hair, well greased and heavily laden with gold pins, flowers, jade, and kingfishers' feathers, fearful and wonderful paints and fards, bright red "pants," and invisible small feet. Everybody seems so happy that one forgets the dust, the noise, and even the danger; for the driving is too often both incompetent and reckless. Broughams are very cheap in Shanghai. For fifty dollars in silver (now under five pounds) a month one can hire a carriage daily, or even several times a day, the horse and coachman always turning up fresh. The stables just outside the settlement are connected by telephone with most of the "hongs," so that in ten minutes a carriage can easily be summoned. When a brougham or calèche has done its duty by the white man, it descends to the Chinaman; and thence, as its springs weaken and its wheels begin to wobble, down to the depths of a native hack or hired trap. A skinny pair of horses may be seen careering along at break-neck speed with three painted women on each seat, a nurse on the box, step, or dickey, and a "mafoo" or "boy" perched on the bar, shaft, or any other odd corner. On they go, pell-mell, thoroughly enjoying the fun, the fresh air, and the liberty. Some of these women may be no better than they ought to be, but no one knows much about or cares to interfere with the mysteries of the Chinese harem. Every afternoon a number of smart two-horsed landaus, containing brilliantly dressed European or American ladies, may also be seen mixing with the crowd, the footmen and drivers in the most

immaculate of uniforms ; but it is, or at least used to be, good form for permanent residents to display only one horse, and no one but the Chief Justice (above suspicion) and the "Cæsar's wives" just described was supposed to drive two.

A noble duke is stated by local tradition to have described Shanghai, thirty years ago,\* as a "sink of iniquity." It is true that the ways of mankind savour more of San Francisco or Alexandria than of London, especially so far as casual visitors are concerned ; but after all Shanghai is tolerant rather than vicious, and the mixed population is so good-natured that any one but a murderer may rehabilitate himself or herself after a period of industry, repentance, and quiet. There are, at any rate, no such street scenes at night in Shanghai as there are in London. Drunkenness amongst Europeans is almost unknown ; the only exceptions are sailors "on the spree." Destitute Europeans are liable to deportation, and no effort is spared to keep up the prestige of the white man. The natives are treated kindly and fairly, sharing equally almost all the privileges of the "dominant race." If the tiny public garden in front of the British consulate is strictly reserved for Europeans (or persons clad as such), it is only because the native coolie class is so preponderant that nurses with their charges would neither be safe nor would find room to sit down were every Chinese ruffian promiscuously admitted ; hence a written permission is usually required from all but well-known and prominent Chinamen before they are allowed to pass the gates. This shady garden is the favourite resort of children and babies in the morning ; and the native *amahs* or nurses, who are usually most attentive and affectionate, take the opportunity, whilst the children play about, to discuss the characters of their masters and mistresses, whom they keep carefully informed of all the little scandals of bachelor life communicated to them by other nurses and by Chinese women of their acquaintance. Hence, in Shanghai every one knows who every one is, and what every one does ; the strait-laced are at liberty to tabu the easy-going if they choose : but Peruvians do not behave like Germans, nor Frenchmen like Yankees ; and so it comes round that with twenty nationalities to please nearly

\* This paper first appeared in 1898.

everybody ends by submitting to the inevitable, and, whilst living, letting live.

Shanghai is a veritable republic of the Venetian type. The native authorities have only a nominal *dominio*, but no real *possessio*. A score of consuls rule the roast, but they can only act in matters of general interest through their *doyen* as spokesman, and through the Municipal Council as executive. Moreover, if any change in municipal rule is desired, the consuls cannot give more than a temporary sanction to new regulations until that nebulous body or local "concert" known as the "Ministers at Peking" signify their august approval. A "constitution" has thus grown up, and Russians, Germans, Turks, Japanese, etc., who have only the vaguest notion of popular liberties at home, may find here a preliminary training in the arts of freedom. Of course, in matters touching the claims of his own nationals against Chinese, each consul is free to deal direct with the mandarins. The Chinese authorities are not allowed to issue proclamations in the settlements, except under the joint seals of themselves and the Council. They may make no arrests unless the senior consul endorses the warrant, which he will not do unless good *primâ facie* reasons are given.\* Chinese defaulters and offenders are subject, in minor matters, to the jurisdiction of the "Mixed Court," a strange tribunal, where a native magistrate nominally presides, and a foreign assessor really pulls the strings. A punkah cools the "court" as it smokes its cigar on the bench and administers rough justice; the forms of procedure are Chinese; that is, all parties, witnesses included, have, unless foreigners or privileged, to address the embodiments of equity upon their knees. The ushers, head police, and staff generally are Europeans, and European counsel may plead before the court. There is a strange jumble of dialects, for the Shanghai-Ningpo group is only understood locally, and at least half the natives haled before the court come from Canton, Tientsin, Fuh Kien, or elsewhere. "Pidgin"-English has to be tolerated to some extent as a *lingua franca*. In grave cases the Chinese territorial authorities hear the pleadings in their own courts, and in all cases Europeans are sued before European courts. The

\* Last year, 1902, the rules were amended in favour of the municipality.

consul or the Chinese authority has a right to "watch the case," if he chooses, from the bench, and in cases of homicide the Chinese are always very tenacious. Those Europeans or Americans who have no treaties are nominally liable to Chinese law, and are brought before the Mixed Court; but, as a rule, no Greek, Paraguayan, Roumanian, or Nicaraguan would be unreservedly entrusted to the mercies of China. Torture is not allowed at the Mixed Court, but the most brutal inquisitions go on at the Chinese *yaméns* still. There are one or two old residents of China who have no nationality at all, their authorities having disclaimed them, or themselves having disclaimed their authorities. But in Shanghai there is always a *modus*, or, as the Chinese say, "that often actually is which in the nature of things cannot be," and something invariably "turns up" to solve the difficulty. The minor Powers have no regular assessors, but the British assessor sits thrice a week or more, the American twice, and the Austrian or German once. No Chinese *employé* of a foreign Power would be tolerated as assessor.

The French have their own Municipal Council and their own Mixed Court. They are so few in number that, unless they kept their own settlement in their own hands, they would at once be swamped and outvoted. On the whole, their settlement is competently and fairly managed. The British and American settlements have one Council between them, and any consul-general (*i.e.* the senior in rank and service) may be *doyen* for the time. Even the French consul-general is allowed, if senior in point of arrival, to combine his own functions with that of *doyen*. Practically, it is the British, German, French, or United States consul-general who is always *doyen*.\* Minor Powers usually waive their rights, and no Japanese has yet had a chance. Probably, when extra-territorial jurisdiction is abolished† in Japan, the Japanese will assert their rights to take turn by turn in the doyenship. Once or twice the Portuguese consul-general has "come round" in turn, but things do not work well except under the representative of a Great Power; the interests of Austria, Italy, Turkey, or Spain, are not sufficiently large to make

\* Since 1898 Spanish and Portuguese consuls have taken periodical turns.

† It has been abolished for several years now.



them locally "great," but owing to the excellent Chinese training possessed by the late Austrian representative, he figured prominently for many years as assessor, vice-consul, consul, and consul-general.

Great Britain is the only power which has had a court separate from the consul, and of late years even Great Britain has merged into one the functions of Chief Justice and consul-general; but this is not found perfectly satisfactory, and before long the Supreme Court will doubtless have its separate Chief Justice once more. In fact, the functions were again separated while this was being printed.\* As all the consuls, and even the Minister, are in a way subordinate to the Chief Justice in certain legal aspects, it is incongruous for the same officer to receive peremptory diplomatic instructions from the one, and to issue peremptory judicial orders to the others, who, in other matters, are as independent as the consul-general. Moreover, his functions and opinions as consul must often clash with the expected calmness of a judicial mind. It may be his lot to adjudicate in the final resort upon a matter concerning which his protest may be on record as protector of trade. I need hardly say that these are my own private opinions only, and are only uttered in order to further illustrate the nature of European life in Shanghai.

Many will be surprised to hear that life in China is much more luxurious than it is at home. Servants and food are so cheap that a dollar goes almost as far there as a pound at home. Moreover, houses are so arranged that every man or woman has his or her spacious bath-room attached to the sleeping apartment. The usual life of a Shanghai-ite is as follows (the difference between the length of summer and winter days is much less than in Europe): He rises soon after dawn; if he is energetic, he goes out for a walk, a ride, or (now) a turn on his cycle, and gets his early coffee on the race-course. More ordinarily he stretches himself on a long cane chair, and has his tea and his smoke at home. The daily paper turns up during this "lie off," and a few (very few) take the opportunity of reading the native organ too. Almost every man, woman, and child has a bath, or the

\* The change was made after Sir N. Hannen's death.



means of taking a bath, every day during the year. In Shanghai hot and cold water taps are not uncommon since the extension of the water-works system, but in the other parts, and also largely in Shanghai itself, the water is generally carried up in buckets by the water-coolie. The "Ningpo bath-tub" is a huge jar, weighing about 3 cwt., and beautifully finished off with a green glaze inside. Its upper rim is oblong, and about eight or ten feet in circumference; the bottom is about five or six feet in circuit, and in it one person, or even two at a pinch, can splash about in comfort. These cost from seven to ten dollars, according to size; but a good wooden tub can be got for two or three. In the better classes of European houses the only outhouses are the stables and servants' quarters, and often the kitchen, every accommodation for the "masters" being provided in the bath and dressing rooms. As a rule, the "boys" are allowed to bring morning tea into the mistresses' rooms as well as the masters'; but, as married ladies usually possess amahs, the amah often does it. The Chinese "boy" is very quiet, noiseless, and clean; there is not the same inclination to regard him as a real man as there would be if he was a European. Cases have occurred where "boys" have attempted to take advantage, but there is no general sense of danger or impropriety. Chinamen make excellent nurses, and it is not at all uncommon to see a pigtailed individual dandling and cooing to a foreign baby with a milk-bottle in his hand. In fact, Chinamen do excellent "woman-pidgin" of all kinds; as washermen they are unrivalled, though at first, owing to native "olo cussom," they do not care to wash women's clothes. As dress-makers they are excellent, and many ladies keep one regularly at work, all the year round, in the hall or porch; in the Chinese shops it is not unusual to see a score of Chinamen, in a row, engaged upon sewing-machines. But in very few parts will the men do the most menial portions of housemaid's cleaning work; this is always done by women, who, like our charwomen, visit the "hong" only for an hour or two in the morning. In Foochow whole regiments of handsome and gaily-dressed women, with large bare feet, walk in from the country daily, each with a couple of large buckets attached to a pole on her shoulder, in order

to carry away fertilizing matter for the fields. Some families, especially the Americans and the missionaries, adhere to the English custom of breakfast, which, of course, often involves proportionately early dinner and supper. But "society" at Shanghai and elsewhere almost universally adopts the French practice slightly modified. "Tiffin," or *déjeuner à la fourchette*, takes place at 12.30, and dinner at seven or eight. These meals are practically the same. A glass of sherry to begin with ; soup, fish, *entrée*, joint, sweets, curry, cheese, salad, and (except amongst Protestant missionaries) beer or wine ; and then dessert. Thirty years ago living was more princely, and "junior messes" were expected to dress, and to "keep up the credit of the house" by having really good liquor. Fifty, or even a hundred, taels a head monthly—then equal to £10 to £20—were allowed ; and, apart from sherry, liqueurs, brandy and soda, and such trifles, claret and champagne were always offered. But in these hard times manners have changed. In the hot season a change of clothes is always necessary ; but "dressing," as such, is now the exception, and only rarely kept up at bachelors' messes. It is seldom, indeed, still that a guest is offered nothing beyond beer or fine claret, but the general style is considerably reduced, and thirty taels—nearer £5\* at present rates—would be a good mess allowance for a junior. The usual hotel charges are three to four dollars a day (7s.) for everything. The chief work of the day is done between the bath and tiffin hours, and at Shanghai the "exchange" is the club. Here, from 12 to 12.30, the hall and bar are crowded with merchants, brokers, officials, and loafers, some looking out for a tiffin, others anxious to secure guests. A cocktail at the bar is considered the correct thing. Hospitality is the rule all over China, and especially at Shanghai. If a man, not being a confirmed "cadger"—and even then his regular patrons take him in turn—if a man is at all genial, and has a mind to change his diet, he may always be sure of half a dozen invitations. Many men tiffin regularly at the club, where a man can live royally, bedroom and everything but liquor included, for the equivalent of seven shillings a day. "The club" is the English club, conveniently situated on the "Bund," at the junction with the French settle-

\* Now barely £4.

ment ; but there is another English "country" club, admitting ladies, with tennis grounds, on the road to Siccawei ; a German club in the background of the settlements ; and one or two other less fashionable places of resort elsewhere. During the morning, up to tiffin time, Shanghai is overrun by "brokers," who drive their traps about between the banks ; the importers and the exporters negotiate with them bills, margins, contracts, and so on. Just before tiffin hour there is a brief lady parade on the bund, where the gentler sex display their costumes, make up their tiffin parties, and take the air. It is only the more energetic of them—at least, in the warm seasons—who go out shopping in the morning. The banks almost invariably "have a tiffin," which, however, closes promptly within an hour or so ; the consuls, *taipans* (heads of houses), customs officials, and junior messes, each dispense hospitality in their own way. Broadly, it may be said that no one tiffins alone. After tiffin most people have to go to work again, from about 2 or 2.30 to 4 or 5. The luxurious take a snooze ; the cadgers doze over the mail papers at the club ; the ladies are generally supposed to snooze too, or, at all events, to unbrace themselves a little in preparation for the five-o'clock tea. This is the hour for calls, and it is then that the softer and sterner elements of Shanghai life mostly meet on common ground. From that time to close upon the dinner-hour every one turns out, either to ride on the "Rotten Row" at the side of the main road ; to drive, walk, cycle, play tennis, rackets, etc. ; or to "train" for the races. There is a good deal of hospitality at the dinner-hour too, but perhaps not so universal as at tiffin. Whist is the rule after dinner, and parties are formed according to the points played. As an illustration of the cosmopolitan life of Shanghai, it may be stated that for many years the "senior rubber" (dollar points, five on the rub) was regularly played by the Chief Justice, the United States Consul-General, and the Spanish and Italian Ministers ; any one might cut in, but those four formed the nucleus. I cut in only once, and had the pleasure of relieving that grave body of fifty dollars. Quarter-dollar and dollars were more in my line ; but even I rather looked down on the ten-cent men. Sunday tiffins are a great Shanghai institution. It is correct to go

to church, and after that the older residents usually either give regular tiffins or go to them. Sunday afternoon is snoozed away, for, despite the efforts of the Germans, the Anglo-Scotch element has put its foot down upon Sunday billiards and cards at the club.

Shanghai has a magnificent race-course and grand stand ; and the races, which take place spring and autumn, are great events. Training upon Mongol ponies goes on as seriously as though the Derby itself were concerned. Coffee and bread and butter are served on the course at dawn gratis to all who care to come for it, and training goes on for a month or more early in the morning. The grand stand is like any other grand stand when the great day comes ; all the new toilettes of the season are exhibited ; each walk in life yearns for the smiles of the walk richer than or above it ; the knowing ones give their horses a basin of champagne on the sly, and pound about thoughtfully with jockey-like mysteriousness as though they had the cares of Europe on their backs ; the "great ladies" are accorded the stewards' arms for tiffin, and the Chinese mob is only visible through binoculars at suitable distances. The chief "lotteries" on the night preceding the first day's racing are held at "the club," and here again the manners and customs of Old England are solemnly aped in the most approved style.

In the winter season there are drag hunts (a herring drawn along by a horseman some distance ahead of the field), and paper hunts (bits of paper scattered by the "hare" at intervals) ; sometimes the irate Chinese peasant—here again in faithful imitation of the British farmer—"ups with his bamboo pole," and hits somebody over the head. However, of late years the rustics have been squared by a regular compensation system. They do their best, however, to get a shot in the leg whenever a sportsman comes by, for then there is "number one chancee" for special compensation. Rarely does a season pass without the British Consul having to salve a Chinaman's wounded pate and pocket. For killing a Chinaman outright the charge is often several hundred dollars ; but, of course, sportsmen are as careful as possible. In such cases the mandarins always demand the execution of the sportsman as their first bid for popularity.



Shanghai is so over-crowded now that few houses in the settlement, except the British and French consulates, can give a garden-party. The French "compound" is rather confined, and the routs have usually, therefore, an official *fête* air about them ; but in the British enclosure there is ample space for half a dozen nets, and here lawn-tennis parties are frequently given during the summer evenings. Of late bicycles have come in ; previously horse-riding was largely indulged in by both sexes ; but there is always the objectionable ride through the settlement to contend with, and so most persons begin their mount at the stables near the race-course. The "farm" is another local institution, situated near the race-course, and sealed bottles of carefully-kept milk are sent out thrice a day from this flourishing place, which also supplies a very fine but unpleasantly white-looking butter. Mothers at Shanghai need be under no anxiety on the score of milk. There being no duty whatever on food and personal requirements for Europeans,\* it follows that living, apart from the low prices ruling in China, is exceedingly cheap. In many parts of China eggs are thirty or forty for a shilling ; chickens, threepence to sixpence each ; venison, twopence a pound ; beef, the same ; mutton (which must come from Mongolia or Calcutta), always dear ; game, in the winter, cheap ; fish, fruit, vegetables, etc., in proportion. Of course, in a wealthy place like Shanghai market prices go up, but even in Shanghai most prices are "beneath contempt." The only really expensive things are mutton, foreign-grown fruit, good milk, and a few other Chinese luxuries unappreciated by Europeans. All wine is cheaper than in England ; so are tobacco, cigars, clothes, and furniture. Good house-rent is rather high, but not so when we get out of our heads that a dollar—though worth just as much as ever in China—is only half what it used to be worth in gold. Servants range from five to twelve dollars a month, and "find" themselves. Chinese tailors are quite good enough for all except the *gommeux* and the "mashers." Chinese-made upholstery and furniture is quite the equal of European in appearance ; and, if it is not so durable—well, durability is not a special feature of Shanghai life.

The damp affects the exterior of houses, and the quality

\* This comfortable arrangement is now a thing of the past.



of the building and finish is not of the best. Hence few residences look neat unless painted almost annually, and cobbled up, re-plastered, and varnished frequently. The white ants, too, though to a less degree in Shanghai than elsewhere, create great depredations. Soda-water is locally manufactured, of very passable quality, and cheap; light German beers, wishy-washy though they are, run neck and neck with the infinitely superior but headier English beers; but it is not every one in the East who can drink beer: it produces "liver." The water at Shanghai and Hongkong is good; at Hongkong absolutely perfect. In most other places one has to boil it and be careful. Though several large European "stores" flourish, especially at the two great centres named, it may be said, in general terms, that the "heathen Chinese" has a monopoly of the retail trade. This is the sort of colloquy that goes on between the wife of a rich European merchant and a Chinese shopman every day in Shanghai:—

*A.* Mornin missizi. What ting you wanchee?

*B.* My wanchee namba one klah, mendy clo.

*A.* Yih. Massa talky my. Allo bloky he lat talowssy.

*B.* My smallo boy he wanchee talowssy too.

*A.* To-day my catchee plenty falesh jam, bota, veshitabu, Bombay licye. Dat kolly pase welly guh tastee; sposey puttee chutney, no can spilum so quih. Parsee man too muchee chowchow so fashion.

*B.* Lookee here, Ching-chong, my tinkee you that ting too muchee olo. You buy cheap!

*A.* Naw! Ebbely ting nampa wan! I no pay you owloo ting. Sposey you no likey, sendy he back, can do!

*B.* I tinky you too muchy hompox, Ching-chong, belong swee mow outside; inside largey squeezey.

As a rule, these Chinamen are thoroughly trustworthy so long as ordinary shrewdness and prudence are used in dealing with them. A European shopman is as much out of place at Shanghai as a European valet: it does not seem to become the dignity of the white man to do "counter-pidgin." Hence the majority of them are "bosses" of some sort; if not consuls, commissioners, *taipans*, "lity-pidgin" (write business, = clerks), or managers, they are skippers, foremen, inspectors, engineers, or shop superintendents. The only "proletariat" cases are the seamen, and they soon find themselves in jail or on their way home if they do not behave themselves decently.

Very few English women take to Shanghai in the hour of their misfortune ; but there are more Americans, Austrians, and Germans than can be associated with strictly orthodox municipal life. California is much nearer than Europe, and that is probably the reason. If occasionally a European woman is found married to a disreputable Chinese, no matter how regularly, means are found to get her home. If an old resident falls into evil ways, a subscription is soon raised to get decently rid of him, or, if possible, to set him up on his legs again. The seamy side of our English home life is not much seen ; and just as in India every white man is a *Sahib*, and in the southern islands a *Tuwan*, so in China he is considered to be of the lettered or *sien-shêng* type.

If Chinamen treat our women with respect, it is not because they think they deserve it, but because our women have the strength of body and mind to insist upon it. At first the Chinaman fails to understand dancing, *decolleté* costume, walking about arm-in-arm, paying afternoon visits, and drinking tea with ladies alone, smiling and nodding in the streets, sitting together in church, kissing (in which osculatory art the Europeans all differ), male doctors for ladies, and so on. The Chinese woman, unless a mere peasant, has her feet artificially squeezed ; is rigidly confined to the house ; can see no male friends whatever, except the nearest of relatives ; only goes out on the occasions of certain annual feasts ; never, under any circumstances, however low her degree, exposes her neck ; never walks, however humble her sphere, arm-in-arm even with her husband ; never kisses a grown-up son, and never eats or sits with a strange man, *i.e.* so long as she maintains a decent position in life. At first the unbroken-in Celestial mistakes the frank freedom of our English manners, and flatters himself he has "namba one chancee ;" but he very soon finds out that a European woman is as much his master as a European man, and thus, to use his own expressive proverb, "the mangy toad does not aspire to the flesh of the heavenly swan." In Australia not a few Irish and English girls have married respectable Chinamen, who, they say, being more industrious and sober, make much better husbands than the British article ; but, as with European women who from time to time find their way into Persian,

Moorish, or Turkish harems, they lose caste, and soon have to sink into obscurity, or come home. When a Chinaman speaks English really well, and has the manners of a European, exceptions may occasionally be made; indeed, there is at least one Spanish lady in China married to a respected native; and for many years, at Canton, a Chinese physician, attired, "pigtail" included, in Chinese costume, was the sole medical attendant upon all the European and American ladies.\* The English alone of all European races refuse all compromise with "natives," and this is one of the secrets of our political supremacy. In the Dutch colonies half-breeds are almost as good as Dutchmen; the Spaniards (though stricter in the Philippines, and with Chinese) are inclined to be catholic, socially, so long as the *mestizo* is Catholic in religion. The mixed Portuguese of Macao are looked down upon even by the Chinese. The Russians and French are remarkably easy. The English do not mind a New Zealander, who, both in pride and in physical appearance, is quite their equal; he is the only "native" man who "succeeds" as a husband for British women. If the Japanese were only a little bigger they might gain status in time; but so long as a Chinaman wears "pigtails" and petticoats his case is hopeless.

The drawbacks of Shanghai life are, first of all, the mosquitoes, which are a nuisance for at least half the year; in some ports all the year round. Then the heat; for two or three months, for four and even six at the more southerly ports, the incessant perspiration is exhausting. The smells in Shanghai and Hongkong are reduced to a minimum, but at most of the other ports a European woman is practically confined to the narrow area of the settlements, on account of the filth, the noisy curiosity of the natives, and the absence of what may be called "police order" generally. The very cheapness of servants and the very dignity of Europeans conduce to listlessness and idleness on the part of women. There are no "shops," even at Shanghai, in the sense of street promenades. In Shanghai and Hongkong the bands play, but, elsewhere, one may be years without hearing other music than that of one's own piano; and, as to theatres,

\* See chapter on "Dr. Wong" in *John Chinaman*.

concerts, and shows generally, there are never any except at these two centres. A man has always the distraction of his profession ; but a woman, unless resourceful and courageous, soon pines for home. Moreover (and this is serious), the heat "washes her out," both in colour and energy. As to danger, there is none at either Hongkong or Shanghai, though there have been riots at both places. At Canton, Foochow, Chinkiang, Wuhu, Ichang, Chungking, Wênchow, and Tientsin there have been serious risings, sometimes loss of European life, destruction of property, broken heads, and so on ; and at all the minor ports, besides the extra risk of "rows," the above-described Shanghai amenities are invariably on a lesser scale, whilst the disagreeables are intensified. For the wife of a consul, customs' commissioner, or *taipan*, provided with a good airy house, life may be made tolerable if the woman be cheerfully disposed and actuated by a sense of duty. Otherwise, I should say to all ladies : "Give China a wide berth," unless they can make sure of Hongkong or Shanghai. Of course, Hongkong is British, and not Chinese at all ; but, in most respects, European life is much the same as in Shanghai.

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## CHAPTER II

### PERSONAL REMINISCENCES TOUCHING OPIUM-SMOKING

ALMOST the first Chinaman I set my eyes upon when I landed in China proper in the year 1869 was one Wong Kung, the *compradore* or petty accountant in the British Consulate at Shanghai : he had been in that position long before 1869, and even at that date he had acquired a well-established reputation as an opium-smoker. This man continued to serve the Consulate faithfully and well in the same capacity until about four years \* ago, smoking opium steadily all the time, and never, so far as I am aware, permitting this habit to interfere in any way with his official or social duties. Like most well-to-do Chinese, he always had around him a number

\* Written in 1896.

of hangers-on in the shape of clerks, wives, concubines, and poor relatives, all more or less dependent on him; but his household, though in the consular enclosure or grounds, was invariably treated as private, and sacred to himself. No one asked any questions or interfered in any way with what went on inside: he ruled his people as a petty despot, and apparently to every one's satisfaction. Most of the British consuls at the minor outposts entrusted him with money and accounts: he never disappointed his friends; always acted punctually and shrewdly; was generally respected; and at last died at an average age, leaving the business to a son-in-law. He always had, it is true, a yellow, cadaverous, opium-smoking appearance, but the state of his general health rarely if ever kept him from his counting-house: he could well afford his indulgence, and it certainly never prejudiced his mental power. And here I may repeat an observation which a private servant of mine—a sort of Chinese Sam Weller—once made to me: "Stupid men like myself don't smoke opium: it is always the men with brains who smoke; they concoct profound schemes whilst they are smoking." I have certainly found that opium-smokers are usually men of higher mental powers than non-smokers. It is generally believed by the Chinese that long-continued opium-smoking checks or stays altogether the power to beget children. If so, then this seems to be the only penalty that Wong Ko-ung ever paid. I believe I am right in saying he died childless, in spite of his extensive family connections.\*

After this first experience I spent two years and a half in Peking and Tientsin, scouring the surrounding country in all directions, visiting many large towns and villages, and travelling between 2000 and 3000 miles on horseback upon the Mongolian steppes beyond the Great Wall. Both in Peking and Tientsin it struck me that the effects of opium were rather bad. I often used to drop in at the opium-dens to watch the smokers. There was never noise or disorder. Nor, on the other hand, did I ever perceive any skeletons in rags, or any signs of shameless debauch and abject misery,

\* I have since received from Tao Mai-sen, the present compradore, a portrait of his uncle. I understand from a former consul-general (this year deceased) that Wong was not quite childless.



directly traceable to opium. Debt and impecuniosity are chronic conditions all over China. In the northern parts dirt and vermin are also well-nigh universal with the common people, in each case quite independently of opium. In the winter it is so bitterly cold, and in the summer so scorchingly hot, that the opium-houses, with their pale light and roomy couches, are delightful resting-places; certainly not so brutalizing in aspect as the noisy gin-palaces of English towns. In the hotels I noticed that merchants and hawkers usually took a few pipes morning and evening. As the whole hotel population, of all ranks, ages, and sexes, often made up their beds upon the same *k'ang*,—a sort of raised brick platform, covering half the room, and heated with straw, argols, or brushwood,—I had abundant opportunities of both smelling and tasting opium. I found the smell rather sickening or cloying, but not otherwise disagreeable. I never had the courage to gulp down the smoke; but, taken into the mouth only, it seemed to me rather nice. I noticed that women very often smoked, much oftener than (I subsequently found) in the south. A good many women of but moderate reputation are wont to haunt the average Chinese inn: besides, there are cooks, scavengers, the landlord's family, a few female travellers, and so on. Also in the shops and eating-houses women managers are a good deal in evidence in the north. Perhaps we Europeans saw more of them than an ordinary native traveller would have done, because their curiosity often prompted them to come and peep at us. I observed that the Manchu women often smoked opium too: they stand about the streets and doors much more freely than the Chinese women, and nearly always smoke tobacco. All opium-smokers seemed to me to be rather ashamed of the habit. I never heard any one of either sex go so far as to praise it or recommend it. The chief impression left upon me was that it caused a waste of money and time, and I believe these considerations usually operate after a season of indulgence to disgust the smoker, and cause in him or her a desire to discontinue it. Certainly the feeling of shame, weak and unsteady though it may be, is much greater in the moderate opium-smoker than in the English excessive drinker. I was over and over again asked if I could cure

the craving. Often a smoker would rate me gently for belonging to a nation which supplied the noxious drug; but as a rule he did not seem very serious about it, and there was always a sort of lurking consciousness in his manner that the charge was mere clap-trap. The fact that Europeans themselves would not smoke (except out of curiosity), and despised Chinese smokers, seemed to leave a great impression upon the average victim. I often heard tales of excessive smoking—how such a man smoked all night and slept all day, and so on; but I never once heard of a man absolutely ruining himself or his family by indulging; still less did I ever come across a case myself. Peking is at best a vicious place. Here we have an idle Manchu population, supported by the Government, and to a great extent debarred by custom from competing in industry with the pure Chinese, even if willing and able.\* Besides this, Peking is the coveted haven of all officials who have saved money, and wish to keep in touch with the Court. Money is plentiful, and luxury is great: to a large extent the same may be said of Tientsin. Though in the north spirituous liquor is freely drunk, drunkenness is very rare, and for this reason causes no feeling of shame when it does occur; in fact, it is rather a graceful and complimentary act to get tipsy, or feign tipsiness, at a feast: there is absolutely no sense of degradation in it, such as is inseparable from opium-smoking. My first servant at the Legation was an opium-smoker; so was my first teacher: and both of these were provided for me officially. I think most of the other teachers and servants were non-smokers. Those who did not smoke, invariably made fun at the expense of those who did. The above are the not very profound impressions which daily contact with opium-smokers left upon me after over two years' residence in the north. To sum up, all who smoked were rather ashamed of it: none ever boasted of it: most admitted that it was a "fast" and debauched form of pleasure. It undoubtedly, as I could see, caused a waste of time and money; and this extravagance of course to a certain extent impoverished the family concerned; but I never noticed any dreadful inroads

\* Since the "Boxer" wars, I notice that steps have been taken to modify the exclusive social and economic position of the Manchus.

upon the constitution, nor did I often hear of such ; and when I did, the victims described were rich, and could afford it.

After this, again, I spent two years and a half at Hankow and Kewkiang on the Great River, travelling overland between the two places, and, when travelling, of course living in native inns. My residence at both these ports was upon the European "settlement," and therefore the facilities I had for mixing with the villagers and shop-people were not so extensive as in the north, where we travelled more, and seldom spoke anything but Chinese ; still, I used to walk out every day. The official writers at both consulates were opium-smokers, but at the same time fat prosperous-looking men, of great intelligence. My private teacher was also a smoker. He was about forty years of age, had just bought a concubine, and she soon presented him with a baby. As at Tientsin, so at Hankow and Kewkiang, the more intelligent of the official servants in the consulate were opium-smokers ; in fact, a leading Chinese servant, like the characteristic French valet of the plays, must be a bit of a rogue, if he is to keep an effective eye on the others. My own body-servant, who remained with me from this time onwards for twenty-five years, was not only a strict non-smoker, but also a rigid non-drinker : he would not even use tobacco. He belonged to the sect, wrongly described as "Vegetarians," which recently distinguished itself by massacring a number of helpless missionaries near Foochow.\* He despised and was a deadly enemy of all opium-smokers. He often used to beguile the time whilst he was assisting my toilet, or waiting upon me at table, by recounting the villainies of the other servants. Yet I never heard him say that any family had been ruined by opium-smoking. He knew to a nicety how many pipes or hours a day the viceroy, the governor, or the general smoked ; how much the prefect paid for his concubines ; who gave and who took bribes, and how much ; and all like matters which form the subject of ordinary Chinese conversation : but he never told me any harrowing opium stories of dying by inches, starving wives, early deaths,

\* Since this was written, in 1896, I have accumulated more information about the *Tsai-li* ("In the Inside"), or "Vegetarians ;" but this is not the place for it.

and wasted opportunities. Rather the reverse. It was: "Such a one, in the depths of the night, over his opium pipe, concocted such and such a successful scheme for filling his pockets." During these years on the Great River, I casually noticed a considerable waste of money and time in connection with opium-smoking: nothing more. It was also evident that, as with our dissolute "corner-men" in England, so with the Chinese opium-smoker, the evil habit often lost a man a job, kept him in shabby clothes, and gave him a sullen, self-indulgent, and hangdog appearance,—I was going to say, made his house less comfortable: but nearly all Chinese interiors, with the exception of those of the small rich minority, are grimy, comfortless, and unfurnished to the last degree; so that in this respect there is little difference to chronicle in favour of the non-smokers.

On two different occasions I resided in the celebrated and busy city of Canton, spending a year and a half on the "settlement," and a year and a half in the Chinese *yamén*, or "official residence." During the whole three years I used to parade the native streets for at least two hours a day, prying into every nook and cranny, acquainting myself with officials and people of every rank and class from the highest to the lowest, studying the local dialects, and getting as nearly as I could to the bottom of everything connected with social life. My personal teacher, a man of extremely lofty character, and subsequently employed for many years by the Hongkong Government, was an opium-smoker, as I learnt through my loquacious servant, and subsequently again from the teacher's own official employers.\* He was so ashamed of it that he seems to have begun to check the habit as soon as he came to reside with me; but as he was old, miserly, and feeble, he was compelled to surreptitiously swallow opium pills in order to "support the walls of his stomach." The most tried if not the ablest of the official servants were opium-smokers. Of the two writers the smarter one was a smoker.† Opium-dens were common everywhere; but corruption was universal: opium, gaming, and every other popular vice, went on quite merrily at Canton. I had a second private teacher of the

\* See the chapter on "Old Ow" (*John Chinaman*, Murray, 1901).

† See the chapter on "Old Lu" (*John Chinaman*, Murray, 1901).



Hakka race, who was either so heavy an opium-smoker, or so delicate a man to sustain whatever amount he really did smoke, that he possessed scarcely the power to articulate ; but he was gentle and mild-mannered, a very dutiful son, and a kind husband. The Viceroy—who is still, at the age of seventy-two, doing excellent service as a viceroy farther north—was not only a heavy opium-smoker, but told me so himself.\* His chief sorrow was that, despite numerous concubines, he had no child of his own. He told me that it was during his campaign against the Taiping rebels that he first acquired the evil habit, on account of toothache. Two or three years later he was accused by a censor of being an opium-smoker, and was removed from office ; but he is so honest and straightforward a man that the Emperor has been obliged to employ him once more. The Tartar-General was also generally understood to smoke opium. The next highest official, the Literary Chancellor, was not only a heavy smoker, but he was officially accused of it by a censor. The Viceroy was ordered to report, which he did as follows, evidently with his tongue in his cheek :—“What goes on in the depths of the Literary Chancellor’s private residence, your servant, not having the *entrée*, is naturally unable to say ; but your servant observes that the Literary Chancellor’s cheeks are big and fat, and certainly not like the cadaverous cheeks of those who smoke opium heavily : he does not therefore commit himself to an opinion.” In all the passenger steamers, both between Canton and Hongkong and on the Great River, there is ample accommodation provided for opium-smokers : no attempt whatever is made to check it, nor could such an attempt succeed without ruining the company’s passenger traffic. Canton is a city full of charitable organizations, and amongst these are several societies for putting a stop to the vice of opium-smoking. The European missionaries there are also very active in this respect. In no part of China have the European and American medical missions been more successful than in Canton. The Cantonese, though very vain, are a much more gritty and self-respecting race than the Chinese of the north ; and amongst them there are not only a large number of non-smokers, who are anxious to

\* Died 1903. See chapter on “Liu K’un-yih” (*John Chinaman*, Murray, 1901).



cure smokers, but there are many smokers who are most anxious to cure themselves. In the neighbouring British colony of Hongkong there is no attempt made to interfere with the liberty of the subject. Chinese may smoke as much opium as they like, when and where they will; but nowhere do I remember to have seen fewer traces of opium misery than in Hongkong. Life is too active, men are too busy to smoke much of their time away: the people look better fed and more prosperous than on the mainland; and the same may be said of Saïgon, Penang, and Singapore. This fact opens the question: May it not be from sheer weariness and want of something to do that many Chinese take to the opium-pipe? In most places in China organized gambling is forbidden. With the exception of an occasional game at shuttle-cock or kite-flying—only at fixed seasons—there are no outdoor sports. The Chinese rarely walk for pleasure. As already stated, interiors are comfortless. There is no social intercourse between respectable men and women. There is not sufficient house-room, privacy, or light for reading after dark. How is time to be killed? I think that the monotony of existence may be one of the chief causes of opium-smoking. On the whole, though at Canton I was in contact with opium-smokers almost daily, and made a point of seeing as much as possible of native life, the seamy side of opium-smoking did not obtrude itself much upon me. Just as in an English coast town one may daily see the flaring light of the gin-palace, the besotted faces of occasional loafers, the bedraggled garments, and infer therefrom great misery behind it all; so one might fairly infer great misery from the spectacle of numerous opium-dens, cadaverous faces, and tatterdemalion garments in Canton, if one should see it; but I did not see it obtrusively, though, as I said before, I was daily poking my nose into all sorts of nooks and corners. Naturally, a medical missionary will see a great deal more of the seamy side. It is his business.

I next spent a whole year in the true home of opium, the province of Sz Ch'wan, where in the winter season one may see growing hundreds of square miles of the poppy all at once. By boat and on foot, chiefly on foot, I travelled thousands of miles, averaging twenty-five miles a-day for at

least six months, and taking in portions of the provinces of Kwei Chou and Hu Pêh. I used to watch the girls and the children making incision into the poppy-bud, or scraping off the pale juice into basins ; then see the men carrying it to the village market ; the dealers buying up the rapidly darkening mess by the ounce ; the coolies marching off with loads of it on journeys of hundreds and even thousands of miles to other provinces, endeavouring to avoid the taxing stations on the way.\* In this province, though a great many people—I should say at least half—did not smoke at all, yet smoking was, so to speak, universal, and with many almost as much a matter of habit as taking food. Yet here, strange to say, where opium was so cheap and easily obtainable, and so commonly smoked, less harm seemed to be done than in places where the more expensive Indian drug is imported. This fact would seem to confirm what I have suggested,—that it is rather the waste of money and time than any physical injury to the constitution which does the mischief. My first experience was with boatmen. I had about fifty permanent coolies attached to my own boat, besides from fifty to two hundred specially engaged when there was a dangerous rapid to pass. These boatmen were a dissolute, devil-may-care, happy-go-lucky brood—apparently the scum of the province. In Sz Ch'wan, when a man has failed at everything else, he becomes a boatman—that is, for the time being a beast of burden. The pay is about 6*d.* or 1*s.* a month, according to the rate of the sterling exchange (but in effect always about 1*s.*, for low-priced silver is just as good as high-priced silver in China), *plus* three rice meals a day, with a little pork, fish, or salt vegetables, *plus* an occasional “blow-out” of pork when a great danger is overcome, *plus* occasional “wine-money” from the passengers, *plus* an extra pecuniary reward if good speed is attained. The poor wretches, often clad in mere rags, work hard from sunrise till sunset, ropes round their bodies, heads bowed to the ground ; now splashing in water, now clambering over rocks. It is a red-letter day for them when there is a fair wind, and they can all huddle together for warmth, doing nothing but chatter whilst the boat sails along. My escorting mandarin and his servant

\* See the chapter on “*Likin*” (*China*, Murray, 1901).

both smoked opium. So did the captain and the pilot. The next important "official" was the galley cook: he smoked too. About half the coolies would smoke whenever they got the chance, if they were able to buy, borrow, or beg the opium. At the end of the journey their whole earnings went in a spree; and thus they went on, alternately slaving and spreeing, until consumption, cold, or drowning took them off. Life is cheap in the interior of China: it can be deliberately bought for a few shillings, and in any case it is so little valued that few make a fuss about losing it, so long as it is done in an ordinary way. Opium-indulgence does its share, doubtless, towards perpetuating poverty, recklessness, and misery amongst this class; but, so far as I could see, much the same sort of harum-scarum existence would have been led even without the opium. Although I walked a great deal, I always had six or eight chair-bearers with me, and I found that the two or three who smoked opium practically delayed me two or three hours a day unless I kept a very sharp eye on them. Having once inhaled their opium, they were as capable of work as the others; but they were no good, or at least would do nothing, without it; and of course wasted time in buying it, preparing it, smoking it, and packing up their pipes. I used to dine very often with the city general, who still occupies high rank in the north-western provinces.\* He belonged to the "old school;"—that is, he pocketed more than half his men's pay, knew nothing of war, and was a heavy opium-smoker. He always used to excuse himself, when dinner was half over, in order to take a few pipes of opium; then he would return. His wife smoked too. In appearance he was pale and rather "washed out," but he could well afford the luxury, and as he must now be over sixty, cannot be much the worse for it. The civilian officials, with the exception of one who was an opium sot, all boasted of being abstainers, and truly. Even the sot, however, was a capable official. My official servants were all smokers. My teacher was a Christian, and the Catholic missionaries took care that he did not smoke. The Protestant missionaries used to save would-be opium suicides almost daily; but

\* I no longer see his name, and presume he is dead. See chapter on "A Soldier of the Old School" in *John Chinaman*.

suicide is a very common thing in China, and would probably be just as common if the opium were not at hand. Opium is selected because it is more comfortable than hanging or arsenic. In this province no Indian opium was ever used,—at least, with the exception of private consignments for very rich officials who had acquired the habit on the coast. As a rule, the villages, and of course the towns, were everywhere wealthy; food was plentiful and cheap; life comfortable,—for China,—and work abundant. Except in the large towns, no such sight as a cadaverous opium-besotten face was ever seen by me, though it is not difficult as a rule to discern from the tint of the cheek and the colour of the eyeball who smokes and who does not smoke. Opium may cause the usual waste of time, and to a certain extent of money, in this province, but it certainly brings wealth and activity. The poppy does not displace rice, but only cheap vegetable crops, or odds and ends of vegetables grown during the winter. It furnishes the material for a vast export, labour for armies of coolies or porters, a basis for local taxation, and employment for numbers of women and children. So far as I was able to judge from the unrivalled opportunities I had, opium could not fairly be described as a curse to the province of Sz Ch'wan, or those portions of Kwei Chou and Hu Pêh in which I saw it growing. Nor did I observe any strong feeling against its use; still less any feeling against Europeans for having, as some still say, first introduced it. At the same time, no one was proud of being a smoker; every one made some coy attempt at apology or concealment. In short, even in Sz Ch'wan, where I believe much less harm is done by opium-smoking than is done by strong drink in Great Britain, the common sense of the people prompts them to be more ashamed of their weakness than we are of ours. Never once in any part of China have I seen an opium-smoker take the angry and self-justificatory attitude which some of our advocates of free drink will do. My experience leads me to say that, however much opinions among the Chinese may differ as to who is responsible for the introduction of opium, what is the extent of the damage done, and so on, there is but one, absolutely one, opinion throughout the empire as to the wisdom of the indulgence; that is, it is a foolish vice,



and one to be ashamed of and kept in the background, even though the person using the drug be too weak to resist its charm and to act up to his own opinions.

After my stay in Sz Ch'wan, I spent the best part of two years in the province of Chêh Kiang, travelling hundreds of miles on foot, both in that province and in that of Fuh Kien, passing through numerous poppy-fields in both, always living in native inns; being surrounded by native boatmen, coolies, soldiers, and officials; mixing with all classes, and of course hearing what the missionaries had to say. All missionaries, Catholic and Protestant, of course object to opium-smoking. It is worth noticing that though the Protestants are almost as universally opposed to the use of spirituous liquors, the Catholics are not so; which certainly supports the view that, though it may not be so harmful to China as the abuse of drink is to Europe, opium-smoking is, in principle, considered a more shameful and degrading vice. It may be described as an unnatural vice,—its rival, drink, being after all but an appetite inseparable from human nature, and only harmful when taken to excess. My best official servant at Wênchow, as elsewhere, was an opium-smoker.\* Of the officials, only one was an opium-smoker, and he had the usual wan appearance; but he was quite capable, and his indulgence seemed in no way to affect his general health or business capacity. I am bound to record, however, that both in Chêh Kiang and Fuh Kien the evidences of misery caused by indulgence in expensive Indian opium seemed to me much plainer than elsewhere. My bearers were always half-starved, ragged ruffians, but almost always smokers. Often I reached a village where no fowls, eggs, or sugar were to be got; where not even rice was procurable; yet I invariably saw the inevitable 'garish lamp-sign with the equivalent for "Indian Opium" upon it. True, in the case of Chêh Kiang province, the parts I visited had been well-nigh depopulated during the Great Rebellion; but I took all that into consideration, and the definite impression was left upon me that money was universally wasted upon expensive opium by those who could least afford it: time was also of course wasted: poverty and misery undoubtedly resulted from it. There was no counter

\* See chapter on "*The big t'ing ch'ai*" (*John Chinaman*).



wealth or activity, as in Sz Ch'wan, to outweigh the incubus. From this cause (combined perhaps with other causes) the physique of the people was unmistakably deteriorating, and, in short, the use of opium might fairly be described as a popular curse. With slight variations, the same must be said of the northern half at least of Fuh Kien. Though in both provinces the native drug is produced, yet it is the Indian drug which is chiefly smoked, and which does nearly all the damage ; but, I repeat, the damage is more an economical one than a physical one, and it is not fair to exaggerate the latter.

After leaving these parts, I had the opportunity of studying Japanese and Korean life in Corea. In that country, as in Japan, the importation and the use of opium are strictly forbidden (except by Chinese). I believe I can safely say that, as in Japan, so in Corea, no Japanese ever uses it. The easy-going Coreans may occasionally be seduced by the Chinese to use it, but I never came across a Korean smoker, and I used to mix a good deal with all classes of Coreans. The Korean physique is, if "softer," at least so far as external appearance goes, far superior to that of the Chinese. The Japanese also, though shorter than the Chinese, are, man for man, of sterner and sturdier stuff. Japan and Corea both have their weak points, but opium is not yet one of them ; and though there may be no direct evidence in favour of ascribing the superior Korean physique to the absence of opium-smoking, there can be little doubt that the introduction of opium-smoking would seriously injure that physique, and make the people much poorer than they already are, because they would spend less upon their food.

The popular notion that opium-smoking cannot be suddenly abandoned without danger is quite mistaken. The inmates of the Hongkong prisons are never allowed to smoke a single pipe. True, advanced cases are treated for a time with pills or anti-opium medicines ; but that is all. So long as physical force or the requisite force of will is at hand, any smoker can be cured of the habit summarily.

My next experience was the neighbourhood of Foochow, where at different times I spent the best part of three years. The general impression left upon me was that opium-smoking

did more damage here than in the Canton region. The people are more voluptuously inclined, less capable of resisting temptation, not so industrious and persevering; dirtier, and poorer. I can therefore well understand the missionaries of Foochow taking a much stronger view than would be justified in Sz Ch'wan.

After this I spent more than two years in the island of Hainan, where I must say I noticed very little of the evil effect so marked at Foochow: yet it is certain that at least 2000 chests a year must be consumed in the island. The civil governor was a strong anti-opium man, and used frequently to abuse me almost officially for belonging to a nation which had (he said) corrupted China with opium. Notwithstanding this, however, he encouraged the opium-smuggling trade at the expense of the legitimate trade; and when he left, his successor got into trouble for peculating the opium revenue.\* This second man was a great smoker, and bore strong marks of it upon his features. The other officials did not smoke. My chief official servant was a smoker: his official salary was 12s. a month: out of this 3*d.* a day, or 7s. 6*d.* a month, went in opium: he paid 10*d.* a month for a rather good house, and kept a wife and child on the remainder. Of course, in order to feed his family it would have been necessary for him to "squeeze" unless I had assisted him; so, as he was really a useful and intelligent man, I allowed him 8s. a month out of my own pocket. None of the other *employés* smoked opium, but their combined intelligence was not equal to his alone. I took him with me several times to the French colonies, and there he was obliged for economy's sake to swallow pills, as his pipe would have been confiscated had he imported ever so little opium, whilst the price of French opium was prohibitive.

In Tonquin it appeared to me that the excessively high price of opium caused unusual waste and poverty. Here, for the first time, I came across Europeans who smoked, and it is a well-authenticated fact, which I have frequently myself seen discussed in the local French journals, that considerable numbers of Frenchmen have taken to the habit: from what I could learn, it affects them even more prejudicially than it does the Chinese.

\* Chapters are devoted to both these men in *John Chinaman*.

In Java opium is so expensive that the poorer Chinese have to smoke a sort of base mixture, often merely soaked in opium refuse. The Dutch are even stricter than the French, and the rapacious Chinese opium-farmers who buy the right of monopoly cause a great deal of misery in various ways. I spent a year in Burma, where the interests of the indigenous race are carefully safeguarded by the paternal Indian Government. Very little if any harm is allowed to be done to the Burmese, whether by spirits or by opium. The Chinese are, as usual, permitted to please themselves, and are generally the concessionaries of opium and spirit monopolies; but I noticed no misery traceable to opium in Burma, and found that the better classes of Chinese were even disposed to favour a gradual curtailment, if not an ultimate suppression, of the opium traffic. In Siam the Chinese have a perfectly free hand in regard to opium, but I did not observe that they abused it. In Australia and the United States I did not remark anything worthy of special notice in connection with opium. I found that Chinamen did all they wanted to do on the sly, and that the European or white authorities were only too glad to leave them alone.

It is distinctly stated in the Chinese official records that there were over 400,000,000 people in China fifty years ago.\* If we therefore take 100,000,000 adults, and assume that each smokes the very small allowance of a Chinese pound weight a year, that would make one million chests. But 50,000 chests of Indian opium are really much nearer the mark; so that not one in twenty adults can possibly smoke even this exceedingly innocuous allowance. I believe the best authorities put the consumption of native opium at about four times that of Indian. Even then, only one quarter of the total number of adults can smoke this infinitesimal allowance. There can be no question that many sad cases of abuse occur. Medical and other missionaries naturally see more of the injury done than others, because those injured go to them for relief. One medical missionary in Canton told me that he had operated some thousand times (I think) for stone in the bladder; but of course outsiders hear very little of such

\* I have published full proofs in the *Statistical Society's Journal* for March, 1899.

matters. In the same way, so far as opium-smoking is concerned, the casual observer sees very little of the horrors which undoubtedly do occasionally take place. On the other hand, which of us is not a frequent witness in the cities of Great Britain to the ruin and misery caused by excessive indulgence in strong drink? From what I have personally observed, in a casual way, of drink on the one hand and opium on the other, though I entertain no positive opinion, and plead for no particular view, the impression left upon me is very distinct that opium does much less harm to the Chinese than drink does to us, so far as inciting to acts of violence, neglect of family, etc., are concerned. The greatest smokers do not appear to spend upon their opium the proportionate sum of their earnings which our working population spends upon its liquor. Our liquor costs 40,000,000 of us several hundred millions a year; whilst 50,000 chests at £100 apiece, and 200,000 chests at £50 apiece, would only make £15,000,000 a year among 400,000,000 people. Opium-smoking causes no violence, incites to no crime,—unless perhaps it be to stealing the means for a smoke. It is a sensual pleasure pure and simple, and certainly does no good to the constitution, though, if taken in moderation, it may do little harm: in the sense that it allays pain and kills wearisome time, it may even be said to do occasional good, just as morphia does with us. But how is it all Chinese are ashamed of it; or, if not, why do they all try to conceal it, or apologize for it? No one of us thinks of apologizing for drink, so long as it is not taken to excess, or in disobedience to lawful injunctions, or against some generally accepted scruple or pledge. It appears to me that the one is the indulgence of a reasonable appetite which becomes wasteful and injurious when carried to excess, whilst the other is the indulgence of an artificial or unnatural appetite which is always wasteful even when not carried to excess, and which becomes injurious when persisted in, inasmuch as it checks the population. But the unnaturalness of opium-smoking is not greater than that of tobacco-smoking, and that alone is hardly sufficient to condemn it. A French gentleman, Dr. Martin, has recently published an elaborate work to prove that moderate opium-smoking does but little if any harm; and, subject to what I



have said, I am disposed to agree with him. However, having recounted my experiences, I leave the public to draw conclusions for itself.

*P.S. (to original article).*—Since the above was written, I have read a leading article in the chief native Chinese newspaper, the *Shên Pao* of Shanghai, dated the 29th December, 1895. This paper circulates widely all over the Empire. After pointing out that the 1861 Treaty agreement to tax opium prevented China from prohibiting its import from India, the writer goes on to say that for a score or more of years past it has been the policy of the Chinese Government to stop the outward drain of silver by encouraging the planting of the poppy in China. He points to Yün Nan, Sz Ch'wan, and Shan Si as the provinces where its cultivation takes place on a wholesale scale ; but he adds that there are three or four "quotations" of other qualities, produced in the coast provinces of Kiang Nan and Chêh Kiang. Within the last year or two, moreover, it has been extensively grown at Pootung, quite close to Shanghai. He says that his inquiries at all the treaty ports lead him to the conclusion that comparatively few people, even there, smoke the Indian drug,—indeed, they cannot afford it : the injury done by foreign opium is light compared with the enormous damage caused by the native article. In the country districts it is getting commoner and commoner for the peasant to kill tedious time on wet days by stretching himself on a couch and smoking the opium which he or his neighbour grows so cheaply. Even in Canton province, where scarcely any opium has ever been grown, a man recently petitioned the authorities for permission to cultivate it wholesale in the neighbourhood of the city of Canton itself. His arraignment for treason during the late rebellion (consequent on the Japanese war) was the cause of the project falling through. It is therefore unfair to attempt to lay all the blame on foreigners : the only reasonable course is for China to prohibit the cultivation of opium in her own dominions.—Thus speaks the Chinese editor.

As an interesting corollary upon the above, I may also cite a memorial to the Emperor—which is printed in the same newspaper—from the Viceroy of Kan Suh. Owing to



the recent Mussulman rebellion, twenty-seven departments have been partially desolated : he asks the Emperor's consent to waive the tax on the poppy in those twenty-seven. The tax is stated to be one mace or six-tenths of a mace the plot (equal to about 2s. 6d. and 1s. 9d. the English acre, at present silver rates).

Once more, the same newspaper describes a new scheme of the Viceroy Chang Chih-tung of Nanking\* for raising funds by taxing the right to boil opium in Shanghai itself. I am inclined to think, however, this scheme will clash with the agreement of February, 1887, under which China was to refrain from further taxation in consideration of England's consenting to pay *likin* on opium at the same time as import duty.

Lastly, I have recently received a copy of the new native opium-taxing rules for An Hwei province.

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## CHAPTER III

### THE MULTIFARIOUS DUTIES OF A BRITISH CONSUL

MY first experience of administrative independence was at Kewkiang, the consul at which place had to leave for home suddenly in a very critical state of health. I was fresh from a student's life at Peking, and had scarcely any knowledge whatever of the routine duties at a port.

It so happened that a large steamer called the *Shaftesbury* had sunk an iron buoy belonging to one of the two large river companies ; and the captain, who owned the steamer himself, was sued for damages. Fortunately, I had a big, portly constable, with sonorous voice, experienced in the technical ways of the law, and he transformed the court-house into quite an impressive tribunal when the great day came. The audience consisted of one, all the rest of the community being

\* Now (1903) on service at Peking.

either judge, assessors, plaintiffs, defendants, ushers, or witnesses. My experience of the law was limited to certain visits I had paid as a lad to the Courts at Westminster, the Lord Mayor's Court, etc. ; and I remembered exactly how Chief Baron Pollock, Baron Wilde, Lord Chief Justice Cockburn, Messieurs Morton, Carden, Phillips, and others used to tickle their noses with the quills which they wore in the ear, doze off to sleep, glare round occasionally, and peremptorily check the forwardnesses of the Bar. I piled my books before me in exactly the same way, having carefully read up each successive step, and concealed behind my barrier of tomes a number of memoranda with which to pilot myself along as the case proceeded.

I made a magnificent hit at the outset, when the plaintiff (after being duly sworn by the usher to tell the "'ole truth, and nothing else but the truth, so 'elp you God") began to open his written case, by stating that "I could not listen to any statement of alleged facts except on oath in the witness-box." Baron Wilde was the model I selected for didactic style, and I thought it best to tolerate no argument upon this point. The evidence bristled with terrible nautical expressions, such as "starboard tack," "cable's length," "pay out ten fathoms," and others, of the meaning of which I was totally ignorant ; but I had taken the precaution to secure the leading merchant and the captain of a British gunboat as assessors, and left all technical questions to them, confining myself to occasional vapid remarks such as lord mayors make to their clerk ; and to explaining, during a pause, that the action was *in personam*, which meant that the parties must go to the Supreme Court if they wished to proceed *in rem*. (The defendant, who was a bit of a wag, whispered something about *rum* to somebody in court.)

The trial lasted several hours, and when it was time to give judgment, I looked round to my assessors with a toss of the head, as Lord Cockburn used to do to Baron Bramwell and Justice Smith, as much as to say that "the case was plain." I proposed, however, to write my judgment ; and when we adjourned to concoct this, took the opportunity to find out from the assessors which way the wind blew, and evolved the decision gradually. Both assessors "approved"

it. It went against the skipper, who was condemned (somewhat irrelevantly, I am afraid) to pick the buoy up. He appealed, confidentially informing me that he would see both me and the Chief Judge d—— first. The judgment, thus strongly supported by assessors, was sustained on appeal; but the skipper triumphantly sailed his steamer past the obstacle for many a long month after that, remaining in a contumacious state of contempt; until the matter at last blew over, and the skipper died.

Not very long after that legal episode my Chinese boy came rushing in one afternoon with the startling news that "the Admiral was coming." He explained to me what I ought to do; and my uniform, which had lain in its box untouched from the moment I left England, was got out and brushed up. I went off in a Chinese *sampan*, the constable having rigged up a flag at the stern. On my way I perceived that it was the American Admiral, and as I stepped on board "God save the Queen" was played. I blushed deeply at being the object of so much honour, whilst an officer marched me, in front of a file of marines drawn up to receive me, to the Admiral's apartment. It turned out to be Admiral Jenkins, who lost no time in introducing me to the mysteries of mixed drinks. My experience of men-of-war had been confined to such gunboats as the *Leven*, whose captain had acted as an assessor: she was so small that she was steered by one man with a tiller, like a canal flat. But the American was a huge frigate of the old-fashioned type—I think the *Hartford*—and I felt quite bewildered.

I fear the cocktails and mint juleps must have made me garrulous; anyhow, I noticed at last that the Admiral was fidgeting, and I rose to go. Just then a marine came in to report sunset. Admiral Jenkins remarked that he was very sorry. I was rather surprised that a nautical man should be out in his time, and observed that the sun always did set at 5.30 during the autumn. "Yes," he protested, "but what I mean is that I cannot give you a salute. You must come again on my way down from Hankow." Every one seemed distressed that I had to go off ignominiously in a *sampan* without my seven guns; but as no British gunboat ever

salutes a British consul in China, I individually was in complete ignorance of, and indifferent to, my "rights."

However, off I went again when the *Hartford* returned, and this time in fine style in the American consul's boat, which I borrowed for the occasion. When the visit was over, orders were given for the British ensign to be hoisted, and I made, swelling with pride, for the gangway. But, lo and behold! the boat had gone back to fetch the American consul, who had hoisted the United States flag and come for *his* salute. It was arranged, however, that the United States flag should be replaced by the British, and we both went back together, the portly constable, in a frock coat, receiving me on the "bund." My boy assured me that the whole thing went off splendidly.

There was plenty to do at Kewkiang. The British Admiral, Sir C. Shadwell, and Mr. (now Sir Edward) Malet both visited the port officially; there were numerous disputes to settle, both in missionary matters and in trade. These were the good old days when a legal training formed no part of civil service examinations; in fact, these had only been recently introduced at all. Entrance to the service was originally secured by "nomination," and consuls were supposed to find out their duties for themselves.

My next independent port was Chinkiang. I arrived there at daybreak, roused my predecessor out of his bed, bought him out, and got rid of him, all within the forenoon. But whilst we were arranging these private matters, piles of very mysterious documents came pouring in which demanded our immediate attention. These were "bonds" to be signed by British merchants, guaranteeing that the goods brought down under transit-pass were their own property, and undertaking to export them at once. "Donkey-skins, lily-flowers, melon-seeds,"—these were the chief staples. "What do we do with donkey-skins in England?" I ventured to ask. "That's no business of ours: the British merchant swears they're his, and that's all we've got to do with it."

After my predecessor had gone, I asked one of the British merchants the same question. He said he had not the remotest idea what was done with the donkey-skins, but that they were certainly his, "in a way," the question of joint

interest being a "custom of the trade." The export of donkey-skins at that time was enormous,—certainly several hundred tons a week. It was winter, so of course the skins, being frozen, kept well.

The *taotai* was a fine, tall, gentlemanly old man, who had been a Peking Foreign Office clerk : he knew nothing of anything, and only wanted peace and quietness. "What's the matter with the donkeys up-country?" I asked him. He, like myself, thought donkeys never died, and had never seen a dead donkey in his life. He was quite unable to explain the mystery. He said, however, that he understood from the merchants that the well-to-do classes in England took donkey-skins and tea as a tonic. He was as pleased as Punch when I told him I did not believe a single donkey-skin ever went to England, and, as if a new world was opening to his delighted senses, said: "Do you know, I have a shrewd idea that melon-seeds and lily-flowers don't go there either. The fact is, this transit-pass business is becoming a nuisance, and if it is extended without limit, all Chinese merchants will bring everything down in this way. Look here! There are only five articles mentioned in all the bonds signed since I arrived. The rules have not received my formal sanction yet: suppose we split the difference, and let them bring down as many donkey-skins, etc., as they like, whether they export them or not, so long as only those five articles are bought?" I agreed.

Some eight years afterwards, when I was in Corea, the consul at Chinkiang wrote to obtain from me the solution of a mystery which was cudgelling the legal brains of that port. The question was "on what principle had donkey-skins, melon-seeds, and lily-flowers received favoured treatment?" I observe from the Customs Reports that donkey-skins have during the past ten years been replaced by goat-skins, so I presume all the donkeys are dead, and that a murrain had been going on whilst I was there. Certain it is that Chinkiang is the one port in China where transit-passes still flourish, even in purely Chinese hands. As to donkey-skin for a tonic, I found an explanation in the year 1887, when Prince Ch'un, father of the Emperor, was treated for fever with boiled donkey-skin and the mud taken from the bottom



of a deep well: a full account of it appeared in the Shanghai newspapers at the time.

Chinkiang was not a promising place in those days; it had even been rumoured that the consul was to be withdrawn; meanwhile his rank was reduced to that of "assistant-in-charge." Roads were only just beginning to exist, and the municipal council had succeeded in providing a respectable walk of three or four miles for exercise. But there was an old coffin planted squarely in the middle of the fine new road, just where it left the town. Rumour said it dated from the Mongol dynasty of the thirteenth century. No one durst touch it, and it was generally supposed that the "owners" were sitting tight and waiting for their chance. The *taotai* said I might pitch it into the nearest ditch for all he cared, but that it was as much as his place was worth for him to touch it. The municipal council issued notices and offered compensation, and meanwhile every day in our walks and rides we had to go round this obstructive eyesore. Imagine a coffin planted at the entrance to Piccadilly! Each one wanted some one else to bell the cat.

The *taotai* evidently felt conscience-stricken about his rash remark to me, for one day I noticed a proclamation saying that I had forwarded an application from the municipal council, but that he, in his reverent affection for human bones, had expostulated with me to the effect that I must first wait for the agnatic descendants to come forward. This was a very uncomfortable position, for, in case of a riot, the *taotai* and municipal council would both be able to run me in for it. I determined therefore to "go the *taotai* one better," and issued a proclamation somewhat after the following style:—

"In his affectionate regard for skeletons and human bones the consul yields not to the ancient Duke of Chow. By a proper adjustment of the male and female principles, the people are made content, etc., etc."

In a word, it was pointed out that the coffin ran the risk of desecration, and that the "most distant branches of the family" were authorized to take it away at once. When a Chinese audience is introduced to the *yin* and the *yang* principles, it begins to interest itself intensely, just as a Scotch

congregation settles itself comfortably in the corners of the pews when the minister announces that he is going to expound the twelve subordinate points in his doctrine. Male is sunlight, female is Hades: clearly, therefore, the coffin belonged to the inferior world. Taking the view that men who would feed Great Britain's *élite* with donkey-skins would certainly not scruple at shifting a Mongol coffin, I gave a broad hint to the municipal councillors that if the "remotest branches of the family" turned up with pick and shovel, and the coffin utterly disappeared on the first dismal wet night, no questions would be asked. That very evening it blew hard, and the air was filled with sleet. I started up several times in a sort of feverish nightmare, Kublai Khan, with fiery eyes, armed with a tail and a pitchfork, standing frequently before my heated imagination, the wind being mingled with the cries of the Chinese mob attacking the consulate.

I went for an early walk to cool my brain. The coffin had disappeared. The dealers in donkey-skins had taken four municipal policemen with them, dug a hole in the next field, carefully transferred the coffin, smoothed both places over, and slunk away. Nothing happened.

One day at Canton a Hindu brought a claim against a Chinese village. He had been cheated out of the price of some Bombay cloth. At first a correspondence passed with the magistrate; then with the prefect; finally with the viceroy. All these indignantly repudiated the whole business. But the Hindu produced his books, and was very positive; clearly it would not do to allow "British rights" to be trampled upon in this way. Strong language was used on both sides. At last it was agreed that the viceroy should appoint an old wag of a Manchu, a friend of mine; and that the consul should appoint me, the pair of us to hold a solemn joint trial. The *venue* was transferred to the Tartar-General's *yamén*, in which I lived (the old consulate), and the most elaborate precautions were taken to arrive at the truth. Not only the services of the consular constable, but also those of the municipal constable, were called in to keep each witness far out of the hearing of the others. It is beneath the dignity of a Manchu to talk Cantonese, so, although the

Manchu spoke Cantonese, I did all the cross-questioning myself, speaking English to the Hindu, and Pekingese to the Manchu.

I adopted the Socratic system. "Was he riding a white ass or a black ass?" "A black ass, your honour." Then, to the next witness: "Did he walk or go in a boat?" "In a boat, your honour." In short, every single Chinese witness committed perjury in every detail, and it was only by dismissing from the mind all prejudice, and making allowance for the tortuosity of Chinese thought, that it was possible to follow the thread of the narrative and go on with the case. The Hindu was triumphant; the case was clear: his goods had been divided, and the village had conspired to defraud him and swear his honour away. The trial lasted six hours; we had our "tiffin" on the bench, so as to prevent the undue intercommunication of parties and witnesses.

Just at the very last, when the Manchu deputy was arranging with me in Pekingese how to "cave in" and save the viceroy's face, my eye caught that of a good-looking woman; it was the Hindu's Chinese wife. I ordered her to step forward, kneel down, and tell all she knew. The Hindu, in making up his story, had forgotten that his wife spoke no Pekingese and no English, and that she was only there as a spectator, knowing very little of what had transpired in court. I forget what she said, but it was something like this: "My husband had a row with A-cum because A-cum wanted to keep the whole of a pig for himself. My husband never sold anything in that village; of that I am sure, because I remember his asking my brother to write an account for him at his dictation, the one produced in court, and I had to go and borrow A-cum's stamp to affix to the accounts. A-cum is my cousin, etc. etc." The Hindu's face assumed a greenish tint during this speech. The court roared with laughter, and broke up in disorder. However, we arranged a friendly report for the viceroy to the effect that "though the witnesses had clearly stated what was not true, on consideration of all the circumstances we considered that the Hindu should be nonsuited."

During my residence in Sz Ch'wan province I was chiefly engaged in travelling from place to place, inspecting the

trade capacities of the country. To the credit of the Chinese, servants and others, be it said that during my quarter of a century's residence in that empire I was never robbed of a cent, or—what is the same to me—I was never aware of it. The single gigantic exception was at an inn near the great opium centre of Fu Chou, on the Upper Yangtze. I had imagined I was alone in my cobweb-festooned stall, and stripped myself to enjoy a swab down. Just as I was looking round for my garments, I heard a giggling which seemed to come from the ceiling, and poking about with my stick, discovered far away in the distance a sort of gallery or loft in which sat the landlord's wife, daughters, and female relations generally, enjoying the unwonted spectacle.

The aspect of the males in this solitary country inn was so villainous that I decided to get out of the narrow bin assigned to me for sleeping quarters, and rig up a bed in the great hall, that is, in the totality of the inn minus the holes and corners round the sides, which were honoured with the name of "rooms." I had an official robe of great magnificence, which I could put on at any moment in order to receive mandarins, even if there was nothing beneath it but a nightgown. This robe, which had acquired for me great celebrity in the province, consisted of my old dressing-gown entirely covered with black astrachan, the skin alone having cost me fifty-three taels (then £12). In order to circumvent "the gentlemen of the roof"—as the Chinese call thieves—I so arranged this that it lay under me, coiled round my portmanteau of valuables, and formed both a pillow and a mattress.

I rarely carried any weapon beyond a Malacca cane, and this I placed at my side. Being very tired, I was fast asleep as soon as my head touched the pillow. Then I dreamt of murder and assassination, and, waking up, made a sleepy lunge into space with the cane. Some one was hit, and shouted "Ai-yah!" but I immediately fell asleep again.

Once more the blue devils came, and this time I felt my head and feet cold and dangling over the table, whilst I myself seemed to be floating in the air. I shouted "Boy!" and called for a light. My robe had gone, and I found I

was poised on one table instead of lying on two. The thief had crept under the tables and walked off with me. Day was just beginning to dawn. The landlord, of course, denied all knowledge of the robbery. I ordered him to bring me paper and brush, and wrote to the magistrate:—"Chinese law provides that innkeepers are responsible for things stolen in their hotels. I have been robbed of my gown, which cost me taels fifty-three, and this whilst under the escort of your police. Unless I find this sum when I reach Chungking, it will go hard with you."

It took me two more days to get home, and when I did, I found a letter from the *taotai*, saying: "I have received this packet of taels fifty-three for you from the magistrate of Fu Chou." I was quite satisfied, for it was getting too warm for the robe; but my boy said sadly: "You have been sold! The cost of carriage from Shanghai would be taels five at least. The magistrate has made a profit of five taels!"

One winter's day at Chemulpo, in Corea, I was sitting in the "Royal Oak," whilst Dr. Tanaka was prescribing a diet of raw eggs for my quinsy, and kerosene oil baths for my sciatica and lumbago. The "Royal Oak" was an old "pub," which had been brought bodily from Nagasaki, stuck on the top of a hill, and turned into a consulate. As the Russian minister remarked, when he did me the honour to tiffin with me: "There isn't a single straight line in it, inside or out." Just as the Japanese boy was offering me my first doses of raw egg and kerosene, the Chinese boy and the Korean ostler ran in to shout "murder." From my hill I could command the Chinese and Japanese settlements to the left, and the British gunboat to the right, so that with a telescope I knew, despite the quinsy and the sciatica, what every man was about all day long. A glance up the street revealed a drill-master and sixty or eighty Chinese "labourers" in military array, armed *à la* Falstaff's company, evidently preparing for some great event. They certainly looked "a pitiful set of rascals." Five Chinese ironclads and one Japanese frigate lay in the offing, but the more handy little British gunboat was just under my nose. Dr. Tanaka being a Japanese, I advised him to stay where he was unless he wished to be skinned alive. Then the commissioner of customs (an



Englishman) came rushing in in a breathless state: "We have just escaped with our lives; Mr. X. (an American) has been nearly killed; the Chinese are going to take the Customs."

The Custom-house next door, at the foot of my hill, had already once been burnt down by an incendiary, but I had no authority to interfere in a Corean-Chinese row; nor had the navy. Neither the Chinese nor the Japanese had power to land troops without the consent of the other. In fact, there were we all, like a lot of idiots, with our hands tied by "rules." The commissioner implored assistance. It was a question of minutes, even seconds. I said to him: "Here you are; go off with this yourself." The note scribbled on an open piece of paper, addressed to no one in particular, ran: "Please send ten men fully armed and equipped for the protection of the consulate: official request to follow."

The commissioner made record time down the hill, seized a *sampan*, and in three minutes at the outside ten marines with blankets, knapsacks, rifles, etc., complete, were winding their way pensively and silently up the consular hill; no excitement whatever. As they wound round into and out of view they looked as they passed and repassed more like a hundred. The Chinese "army" made tracks at once, and all danger was instantaneously over. Captain Têng (killed at the battle of the Yalu) and the Chinese consul implored me to send the men back so as to save "Chinese face;" but I (knowing he durst not land a man) said that unless he landed marines of his own to preserve order in the Chinese settlement, I would do so myself. The Japanese consul sent round to inquire if it was true that I had two thousand men stowed away in the consular hill. However, Dr. Tanaka was allowed to go now, and was bursting with mirthful eagerness to explain to his consul the whole joke.

Meanwhile, the British captain, who had been out shooting, arrived to take his usual afternoon cocktail with me, and was rather amused to find a lieutenant and ten of his men; the latter feasting, armed to the teeth, on chickens, beer, and other luxuries in my private office round a roaring fire; old Daiboote, the jolly Japanese Brobdingnagian innkeeper, having volunteered to personally provide a glorious feast for the marines.

At 11 p.m. two ambassadors arrived from Söul, the capital, to beg me, in the king's name, not to march the British army upon the metropolis. The king was most anxious that the men should re-embark that night, the Chinese resident having already been at him. There seemed to be an impression that one great battle had already been fought, and that I was at the head of my victorious troops marching to Söul. I was determined, however, to read a good lesson whilst I was about it, so I said: "I don't care two straws about the rights of suzerain and vassal; the Chinese consul has made a fool of himself, and the men shall remain till to-morrow, so that I may see how things look by daylight." At break of day the lieutenant and his men marched down the hill again, it being important to conceal the paucity of their numbers; but people gave the consular hill a wide berth for some time after that, and to this day I believe it is reported to be hollow.

On my second visit to Pagoda Anchorage, Admiral Lang turned up with the effective Chinese navy. I had already met him twelve years earlier at the same place, when we were both juniors. It was part of the very fleet I had visited at Chemulpo when I received a salute of eighty-one guns, each of the nine craft, in defiance of regulation, firing off nine, the last nine being Gatlings or Hotchkisses. I had also met Admiral Ting there. Admiral Ting and Admiral Lang were regarded as one single and indivisible admiral, Admiral Ting to play dominoes with the quartermasters, and Admiral Lang to work the squadron.

The old uniform was trotted out, but I had acquired a "girth" during these twenty years, and it would not go on. It was out of the question to visit a British Admiral in the scratch rig I used for the Chinese. I had just arrived from England, and had brought a chimney-pot hat with me, so I resolved to go in Hyde Park attire. No tall hat or frock coat had ever been seen there before. So away we went. When I presented myself and [my smart gig at the first big ironclad, the Chinese lieutenant, who wore a nondescript uniform of black plush, and carried a telescope under his arm (with which doubtless he had been examining the tall hat), shouted over the side: "That's the Admiral's ship." So off

we went again in the direction indicated. The second Chinese lieutenant, eyeing me with suspicion, asked which Admiral I wished to see. I said: "Either, or both." He rejoined: "Well, neither is on board. May I ask who you are?" This was rather rough, with the British consular gig under his nose. He then said: "What is your rank? I want to fire you a salute." Of course (remembering the eighty-one guns, I was in earnest, especially as Admiral Lang was away) I protested. But he insisted, so back I went, telling Jack, the head boatman, to stop rowing when we should be well off, and to keep out of the line of the guns, lest they should be loaded. After a sheepish period of inaction, we crawled ignominiously home, no salute having been fired at all.

The next day (Sunday) I went privately with Captain Pocock (the brave man who was murdered by pirates shortly after) to see Admiral Lang, and told him the story as a joke. My rig for this Sunday outing was a red Scotch bonnet, an old tweed suit, and a Chinese *sampan*. I never dreamt Admiral Lang would take it seriously; but he did, and despite the fact that it was Sunday, that there was no British flag up, that we were in a Chinese *sampan*, and that my garb was most unconsular, he insisted on the foolish lieutenants' making up the debt of seven guns owing from yesterday; so I got my salute after all.

A few days after that Admiral Ting, who was a jovial brave man, despite his ignorance, came to see me in state. Poor fellow! He died like a man four years later. As for Captain Têng, who perished bravely with his ship, there could not be a more honourable character. When in Chemulpo he used to write me an English letter daily, which I corrected for him. Most of the lieutenants, however, wore Chinese "side:" it was not the fault of the admirals, nor even of the captains, that they cut such a poor show with the Japanese.

Not very long after the stirring events above narrated, my boy suddenly announced: "I have received an offer of marriage." The boy in question, it must be explained, was a big portly man of fifty, whose official career had commenced in 1860, when he assisted in dragging the British guns up to Peking. He was then promoted to the rank of horse-boy,

coolie, boy, and cook ; but, as the Chinese proverb runs : " A man never admits he is a cook ; a woman never admits she is twenty-nine : " he usually gave out that he was " manager of the household. " At Kewkiang in 1872 the *taotai* had offered to make him a colonel. I said : " I thought you were married. " He replied : " My wife died last year ; she was a lunatic ; my parents took advantage of my being the fool of the family to consent to the marriage. " I said : " Well, I'm not going to allow you to throw your old mother over ; half your wages will have to go to her as usual. " He said : " Oh, yes ! my mother has looked after my wife these twenty years. She is now getting old, and I intend to send her a coffin soon. My wife won't cost anything. " " Well, what do you want my consent for ? It's no business of mine. " " I want to know if you will let her live with me, and go wherever you go. " " Is your mother arranging it all at Peking ? " " No, the woman is here ; she is the widow of a naval mandarin who was killed during the French bombardment. She speaks Swatow, and lives with her relations in a corner of the greengrocer's shop, where I go to buy your potatoes and cabbages every day. She is supposed to be mourning for her husband, and has always refused to be sold as a concubine. She has noticed that I am a good-looking man, with a fine position, and has sent go-betweens. " " How much does she cost, and what are her feet like ? " " She says she requires no body money, and though her feet are squeezed, they are not past letting out. " (Some women hedge with their feet, so that they can be either utterly destroyed, or " let out again, " according as it is their fate to become wives or concubines.)

In short, the boy wished to " forswear sack and live cleanly. " His chief if not only defect during the previous ten years had been that he always wanted two or three hours' leave in the afternoon. At Wênchow I found he used to spend his time at the nunneries ; in Corea at the Japanese baths ; and I at once saw the advantage of keeping him chained to the house. " What will be the total cost of the whole business ? " " She has only the clothes on her back at present. A first-class *confarreatio* marriage, including her trousseau, red-chair, music feasts for the gentry, etc., will cost

seventeen dollars. I have served you now nearly twenty years, and I was thinking you might give me seventeen dollars" (at the then rate of exchange three guineas). I said: "Well, I won't have small feet stumping about my premises; if you let her feet out, it is a bargain."

It was duly arranged that the marriage should take place in a fortnight; but almost that very day I was ordered off to a post a thousand miles away, and had to leave in a week. "What am I to do?" asked the boy. "Do what you like. If you stay with me, everything will have to go on as though your wife did not exist. You said she would not cost anything and would be no bother. It must be distinctly understood that she is not to cross my path in any way." The poor boy looked rather disconsolate, but he knew by experience that business was meant. The next day he came in with a gleeful countenance and said: "It's all right; the marriage comes off to-morrow."

I don't know how he managed it, but the next night when I was sitting at dinner the door suddenly opened, and he burst in with his best clothes on. "Here she is." A very well-dressed comely woman of about thirty was shoved forward, and flung herself at my feet, knocking her head on the ground; her feet were already "let out," and she could walk quite easily.

She turned out a great success, but the honeymoon was very short, for her husband had to come with me five hundred miles north, before we started on our journey a thousand miles south, and the Swatow guild took charge of her, shipped her off, and kept her safe in the native inn at Hongkong until our arrival a month later. After that she went with the boy to Burma, and behaved with such dignity that one of the lady missionaries in Bhamo used to go and sit with her. She was allowed a salary of two shillings a month for darning stockings, and she entirely reformed the boy's character, so far as domesticity goes.

One day at Bhamo the boy announced: "Now that I have gained distinction in life, I have resolved to present a coffin to my mother." "Where is the money to come from?" "My savings." "I thought you said you never squeezed." "No, I don't; but my wife manages so well that I have



managed to scrape ten rupees together." "How much does a coffin cost, and how do I know but what those rascally brothers of yours will not steal the money?" "A good coffin at Peking cost thirty dollars. I have eleven dollars due from you at the end of this month, you can advance next month's pay, and perhaps throw in the odd dollars to make up." This was rather a curious way of "saving" thirty dollars, especially as five dollars out of each eleven already belonged to his mother. However, the filial piety was there, at least in the germ, and thirty dollars were duly sent to the Legation at Peking. His mother was instructed to call in person for the money, and precautions were taken that it should really be spent on a coffin.

When I found a year or two later that it was unwise for me to go back to a damp country, I sent out a considerable sum of money to enable the boy and his wife to go from Hainan to Peking and live there in comfort.\* According to the latest news the old lady is still on the right side of her coffin, but the "fortune" has already been dissipated. Like the Pacific Ocean islanders with their "box of trade," when a Chinese boy (especially such a simpleton as mine) gets home, his needy relatives at once proceed to *dévaliser* him of all he possesses.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE FOREIGN OFFICE, THE TSUNG-LI YAMÊN, AND THE FAR EAST

IT can hardly be doubted that the startling events which have taken place in China during the past summer† must have the ultimate effect of causing all the Governments concerned to revise the present inadequate methods of conducting their external relations with the Far East, and it surely falls within the legitimate duty of every one who has

\* He took service with a Customs officer, and died soon afterwards.

† 1900.

been a public servant to contribute his mite to the deliberation of ways and means.

To begin with China: more than one competent writer or Press correspondent has already expressed the opinion that the Tsung-li Yamên must go, or at any rate must transform itself into a properly organized Foreign Office, under the supreme direction of a responsible Foreign Minister; possessing adequate authority to insist upon his instructions, and those of his master the Emperor, being promptly and faithfully carried out by the provincial governments; indeed, the ministers of the Allies at Peking would seem by recent telegrams to have already insisted upon this point.\* The full name of this hybrid department, which was only created in January, 1861, after the signing of the Treaties of Tientsin and Peking, is *Tsung-li-Ko-kwoh shi-wu Yamên*, which, word for word, means "Generally-managing all-countries' business-matters Praetorium,"—for convenience sake habitually shortened in the way which is now made obvious to every one. It never has been a properly organized executive office, like the "Six Boards" or State Departments, each of which issues its peremptory orders (*ying-ling* . . . "It is my duty therefore to instruct you . . .") to the highest provincial officials in all matters appertaining to its own sphere of action; nor has it even the special, or ultra-executive, informal powers of either the Cabinet Council or the Imperial Chancery, which curiously resemble in many respects, both positively and negatively, those of our English Cabinet and Privy Council respectively. It is made up of the Presidents and Vice-Presidents of the Boards; of the Heads of other miscellaneous departments; and also, latterly, of envoys, viceroys, and governors in active service or retired, being either actually present, or merely "corresponding members"; the whole headed by an Imperial prince, either of the first or second class, as spokesman. It is somewhat as though a selection were made of the most experienced members of the British Cabinet, with a few dukes and ex-viceroy or ex-ambassadors superadded; the whole formed into an advisory body, headed by the Prince of Wales, the Duke of Connaught, or Prince Christian, or even by the Duke of

\* A new Foreign Office has now been established.

Fife; but only competent to issue executive orders with the tacit approval or indirect support of a Secretary of State;—in fact, something in its constituent elements like our present Committee of National Defence—my knowledge of which, however, is derived only from the newspapers. In consequence of this want of initial inherent energy in its elementary composition, the Tsung-li Yamên has (when it suits it) degenerated into a mere circumlocution office, and its thunders (unless it chooses to mean business) have always been regarded by the provincial governments as a *quantité derisoire*. The art of the provincial authorities simply consists in interpreting, or reading between the lines—a most congenial one to the casuistical Chinese mind.

The way foreign business was personally conducted in my time was somewhat as follows:—The envoy rode or was carried to the “alley” in which the *Yamên* is situated, accompanied by his interpreter and a small escort. In the provinces both consuls and native officials wear uniform in paying their mutual visits; but in Peking the practice is less formal on either side, and when I was there no European presumed to use a chair; even Prince Kung came in a cart, and Sir Robert Hart’s team of mules held the record. Well, to return to the visit:—cakes, and tea or wine are set out, and as the guests enter, or a few moments later, one or more *goguenard* old gentlemen come in to greet them, as often as not in a hilarious and jolly mood, suited to the gross barbarian tastes of their guests. They light up their pipes, and are willing to talk of horse-racing, foreign curios, clever actors, or any subject under the sun *ad libitum*, until at last the impatient foreigner blunders out his business in somewhat lame Chinese. The Falstaffian old boys’ eyes twinkle merrily as this exhibition of cacophony goes on, rendered all the more droll to them by the earnest manner of the barbarians; and meanwhile a nimble-fingered secretary takes down from behind a screen, or from the recesses of a dark corner, what is said on both sides. Of course, nothing has ever been heard of the matter in complaint, and the first thing is to *ch’a*, or “find out.” After a decent interval and the exchange of one or two querulous despatches, the envoy sends his secretary or interpreter to *ts’ui*, or “hurry up,” the

process of finding out. To sum up a long story, unless the matter is really serious, and the foreigners show signs of getting "nasty," nothing whatever is done at all beyond "slinging ink." After a few weeks or months, a long despatch arrives, quoting the envoy's original despatch in full, and a string of reports from various grades of officials, the last one of whom, of course, denies totally—or in part at least—the truth of the alleged complaint, much to the virtuous disgust of the Viceroy, who sums up the case by saying: "Exclusively of having directed the treasurer and the judge to *ts'ui* the prefect, and force the district magistrate to *ch'a* with more zeal (he *must* ascertain the truth!); exclusively also of having severely instructed X. to hurry up Y.; of having moved the Governor to issue identical instructions, etc., etc.; exclusively of all this—and, in a word, of having set up a hue and cry generally—the Viceroy now begs to communicate this temporary reply to the *Yamên* for the envoy's information, in the hope that the latter on his part will *ts'ui* the consul to *ch'a* once more, etc., etc." And thus it goes on. In the provinces I have had given me counterfeit presentments of dozens of these "interviews," faithfully copied on and sent from Peking to the Viceroys for their information. They had at least this value to the consul, that by quoting the identical words used as a friendly hint by the *Yamên*, it was sometimes possible to frighten the Viceroy into the belief that the envoy or consul possessed indirect information (which, in fact, was true), or was most fiendishly prophetic and weirdly clever (which was not true).

But the Chinese Circumlocution Office is by no means the only one that requires betterment. Of course, as an ex-officer, of more than average obscurity, I admit, as in duty bound, that our own Foreign Office is perfect, that nothing is ever unduly pigeon-holed, and that every official, permanent or otherwise, both *ts'ui*'s with relentless persistency, and *ch'a*'s with zeal and perspicacity. But that does not touch the real *rem acu*. The fact is, the affairs of the British Foreign Office have grown to such enormous dimensions that it is no longer within the power of the most industrious Secretary of State to cope with all the business, or even to glance in a perfunctory manner at all the despatches received; not to speak of replies

sent, and the concoction thereof. What is really wanted is an entirely new department—the name is of no importance—having the same powers in Asia that the existing Foreign Secretary possesses now, and would have left to him in connection with Europe and America, after changes made. Even the best of projected reforms will always be met with objections ; so that in this matter, where no change has yet even been mooted, not to say approved by influential individuals, it follows as of course that objections must be at once anticipated. (Since I wrote this paper, I see that it *has* been mooted in *Blackwood's Magazine*.) It will be instantly urged, in the first place, that such a dual arrangement would be unworkable ; that the Foreign Secretary for the West would never know what his colleague for the East was doing ; that ambassadors and ministers would receive conflicting instructions ; and so on. But it must not be forgotten that the Colonial Office and the India Office are both of them mere reproductions, generated by cellular secession (or whatever the mysterious life process is called by men of science) from the original protoplasm known as *the* Secretary of State. If their present duties were left absolutely untouched, and they were respectively called the “Colonial Department” and “Indian Department” of the Foreign Office, or of the Chancery, no one would be one whit the worse or the wiser. In fact, India already possesses its own “Foreign Secretary,” whose powers in dealing with the Amir, the Persian Gulf, Aden, and the Indian frontiers generally, are just as important, and perhaps even as great as were those of an average Colonial Secretary in colonial matters, until the present incumbent galvanized that somewhat casual department into genuine business life. There is no more reason why an Eastern and Western Foreign Secretary should get “mixed” in their affairs than there is why the present Foreign Secretary and the present Colonial Secretary, or the Secretary for India (including the Viceroy's Foreign Secretary) should find it impossible to adjust the clashings of many interests in South Africa or the Persian Gulf.

The general duties, for instance, of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs are thus officially defined :—

(a) Political relations with Foreign Powers ;



- (b) Protection of Russian interests and trade abroad ;
- (c) Protection of Russian subjects in their affairs abroad ;
- (d) Assistance to foreigners having business claims in Russia.

In order to cope adequately with this mass of business, there are three "departments" in the Ministry or Chancery ; business connected with relations between Russia and European or American States is, of course, reserved for the Chancellor himself, who also keeps the Great Seal ; the Asiatic Department manages relations with the East ; and there is a third department for auditing accounts, promotions, etc. To put it in another way, Russia has long ago had the good sense to split her Foreign Office into two divisions :—if, like ourselves, she had had detached colonies, there might have been three ;—but she has not yet thought fit to create a separate and what used to be a lucrative sinecure called "Privy Seal ;" and she has raised the administrator of her Chief Clerk's department to the dignity of Secretary, or at least Under-Secretary or Assistant-Secretary, of State. Any one who (as I have) has visited French colonies and witnessed the twiddling of thumbs by innumerable holders of posts in the *administration—ronds de cuir* the French call them—will at least thank Providence (let us hope in not too pharisaical a spirit) that British subordinate officials are not in all respects as other men are ; and I have also seen enough of our Indian administration to satisfy myself that one level-headed young Scotsman there often effectively does the miscellaneous work of half a dozen Frenchmen in Tonquin, with about one-tenth of the fuss. None the less it is astonishing what a blighting influence upon the budding official mind is exercised even in England, or in places administered on English principles, by rules, allowances, forms, promotions, "wiggings," and all the other wooden-headed paraphernalia of bureaucratic life. Although the man who can shake himself free from their shackles often succeeds brilliantly, he is just as apt to come to grief by running against some foolish snag, or to grow discouraged by having the handcuffs of etiquette clapped on, if he chances to come across a weak or unsympathetic superior.

Lord Salisbury once defined in public the principles upon which foreign relations should be managed. So far as I remember his words, they were: "I would bring into the management of foreign affairs the same principles that actuate one gentleman in his dealings with another gentleman when engaged in the management of private affairs." As regards the subordinate duty of carrying out the business details of matters in general, I would suggest that it might be possible to define business principles as:—

1. The habit of doing everything immediately that can be done at once; or of doing so much of it as can be done at once; or of taking immediate steps to keep the matter before the eye persistently until something can be done, and then doing it at once.
2. The habit of obliging everybody who desires anything, at once, gratuitously, and cheerfully, subject to the merits of each case, and subject to any definite rules or instructions there may be to the contrary.
3. The habit of leaving even the lowest subordinate the utmost freedom to act on his own responsibility in the most possible cases; of toleration rather than censoriousness; the readiness to overlook errors which are not wilful and persistent; slowness to assume the existence of insolence, neglect, deceit, and idleness; and above all a readiness to own up a fault rather than escape from it at the cost of some one else, or at the cost of truth.

British officials as contrasted with British "business men" do not seem to consider very seriously the value of time, method, punctuality, and promptness; the importance of keeping all information accessible and up to date, and of seeing orders carried out as well as merely giving orders. Inadequately though I may have done my own work, I should have done it worse but for three years' experience in the cotton-broking, silk-importing, and tea-dealing trades. I do not put it that any other officer ever did worse than I, but I say that many excellent men among them would have been better public servants if they had received technical training, and that they left things undone because they did

not know, and their predecessors had not known, how to do them.

No rules will make a man act wisely if he fails to see for himself that rules are merely artificial and unessential clues to indicate all-important principles, and if he makes an ado about adhering to "form" and rules on their own account; on the other hand, no rules beyond the guidance of common-sense are necessary if the broad principle be once realized and accepted that a good public servant, whatever his rank, will do his best to assist every one who desires assistance, promptly and good-humouredly, without stickling for trifling forms and conventionalities. I am certainly not one of those to cry down our military officers, least of all any public man in high office, for the results of a surprise for which the whole nation is equally responsible; but no one will now deny that excessive slackness in business principle, coupled with excessive devotion to empty "form," has been gradually allowed seriously to undermine the efficiency of the Army; and surely there is no harm in attempting to stay or to prevent any nascent tendency to rottenness and decay in other branches of the public service? There is certainly an improvement on the corruption and nepotism of 100 years ago, and it is so because the public has insisted upon reform; and the public should keep watch, not only to prevent any analogous lapses now, but also to increase efficiency step by step with the country's expansion.

Banks and missionary societies, aware of the effects of Oriental surroundings and climate, from time to time send out independent inspectors to China to report upon each branch, to inquire into the physical and mental condition of individuals, the relations subsisting between head and members, and so on. Why should the same not be done with British Ministers in such places as Siam, China, and Corea, and with the huge family of consular officers on their establishments? The public press at Shanghai and Hong-kong has no influence over any official in China, and even the Chambers of Commerce are powerless to set many crooked things aright.

Japan, Corea, China, and Siam; these are the four principal countries whose affairs would fall under the cognizance of the proposed Foreign Secretary for Asia. In

addition, the important French possessions in Indo-China ;\* the Dutch, Spanish, and Portuguese islands in the Far East ; Manila and the Russian Pacific coast (this last also neglected hitherto) would appertain to his "sphere of influence." If we exclude mere consular agents and shipping vice-consuls drawing nominal salaries of from £5 to £150 a year, it will be found that there are more British consuls-general and consuls in China than there are in France, and more in Japan than there are in Germany. Moreover, the duties of a consul in the Far East are much more extensive than those of his colleagues in France or Germany, inasmuch as extra-territoriality gives him authority as judge of a "provincial court," besides unmistakably (if tacitly) conferring upon him diplomatic powers with regard to the viceroy, governor, general intendant, or prefect of the locality. He holds a marriage warrant ; registers births, marriages, and deaths ; possesses notarial powers ; and is, in short, a maid-of-all-work. Hitherto it has been the practice at the Foreign Office to group the American and Chinese business in one sub-department ; but there is very little analogy between the two, and entirely different moods of thought, springs of action, and commercial interests govern the two halves which go to make up that sub-division. Not only is the Far East of sufficient importance now to have a Secretary of State for itself, but the present absence of adequate machinery obscures the horizon, clogs development, and prevents the expansion which is actually taking place from obtaining elbow room and breathing space. Just as thirty years ago our self-governing colonies were snubbed, and have only just begun to rise in our minds like a phoenix from the ashes of narrow parochialism, so it is only now beginning to dawn upon the public mind, and *à fortiori*, the official mind, that our republican or cosmopolitan colonies in the Far East are a developing power to be seriously reckoned with in the future. The whole Chinese question was discussed, on an occasion when I visited the Chinese abroad in all their haunts, in an official report sent from New Zealand to the Foreign Office towards the end of 1888. The following passages appear in that report :—"Throughout all the

\* I see (June, 1903) by the last mail's papers that my excellent friend Tremlett dead, after thirty-four years' residence at Saigon.

above-mentioned vicissitudes the most successful reigning houses (in China) have invariably vied with one another in upholding the 'Chinese idea,' and the peculiarity of the Chinese people is that they are willing to submit to any rule which is in conformity with this idea . . . It is a new phase of her (England's) external development, that she is becoming, and has the opportunity of improving her position as the second great Chinese Power, . . . and if ever friendly understanding with China should unfortunately be broken off, and it should become necessary to . . . occupy a part, or even take charge of the whole, of the Manchu interest in that Empire, we should move naturally in . . . (with no more than 100,000 men) . . . and the Chinese mind would be half prepared for the event."

But not only is a more powerful, more specialized, and more independent engine required to generate the requisite amount of energy and initial impulse at home; it is desirable that there should also be modification in the Legation itself, especially if it is in future to shut itself up as formerly in the seclusion of Peking. Even if the Minister for the time being always had the prompt business-like training of a bank manager, the short shrift with humbug of a Lord Palmerston, and the rapid decision of a Napoleon, he could not possibly deal effectively with the various "cases" that come pouring in upon him every day from the "ports." There are now about thirty consulates,\* and each firmly established consulate sends between twenty and two hundred official despatches to Peking during the year, half being "general," and half concerning "accounts." At least half the general ones are concerned with "rows" or disputes of some kind, many containing voluminous Chinese enclosures, accompanied by English translations (more or less accurate). Sir Thomas Wade was, perhaps (when at his best), the most "dynamic" Minister we ever had, not even excluding Sir Harry Parkes, though he was—both of them were—far from being the most methodic. I have seen him in his bedroom, or his dressing-room, opening merely one mail's despatches from home and from "the ports," when received by him as he spent a day or two in passing through to Peking; it was as much as he

\* Nearer forty ports in 1903.



could do to open them, glance at the few essential words in each, give a few hurried instructions to the "accounts" man and the "general" man in attendance, and bundle them aside with a groan of anguish.

The fact is, the Minister requires several adjuncts or associate ministers possessing full powers to take routine business off his hands, and to deal effectively and promptly with (a) all commercial matters; (b) all missionary matters. Also a naval and military *attaché*, either or both, to collect technical information and keep the Admiralty and the Admiral's business in proper condition, so that the Minister may take diplomatic decisions at once upon information which is up-to-date, knowing exactly where "power" lies, and how soon it can be brought up to a given spot.\*

Most consuls endeavour to settle their own cases; unless there are definite instructions the other way, without ever troubling Peking at all. If a return were called for, showing the number of despatches written from and to Peking and the consulates during the past thirty years, I make bold to say that 90 per cent. of the writing would be found to have been totally waste labour, and not ten per cent. of consular "cases" settled would prove to have been so settled through Peking influence; nay, more, it would be found that in not a few cases the powers of the Legation had been "temporarily borrowed" by the consul, and that the consul had gently moved the Legation along, if not the Foreign Office too.

This state of affairs is by no means always—if ever—the fault of the Ministers. What can a man do with an india-rubber-ball-like body such as is the Tsung-li Yamèn? It yields smilingly to the slightest pressure, and blows itself out again in water-tight rotundity the instant pressure is removed. The writing of innumerable despatches costs nothing; you can get a book the size of Whitaker's Almanack beautifully copied for a few dollars in China. It is a pleasant distraction for statesmen, viceroys, prefects, and clerks to exercise themselves in slyly heating the floor for irascible ministers and consuls to dance on. The only possible way to gain a case in most instances is for a consul to settle down to it as to a piece of sport, and get the Foreign Office, the Legation, the

\* Most of this has since been done.

Chambers of Commerce, the Viceroy, Sir Robert Hart, the Governors of Hongkong and Singapore, the Chinese Minister in London, etc., etc., separately or collectively, as the case may require, to react upon each other (and thus indirectly upon the local authorities); and worry them all round so that out of sheer weariness the local authorities give way, and yield the money or the satisfaction required. As a matter of fact, the consul derives none of his power from the Minister; and all of it from his Commission and his Warrants; the only thing the Minister can confer upon him is the power, if he does not hold a commission in his own right, to act temporarily for the man who really does hold one. Just as the Chinese provinces go the even tenour of their way, though the Peking Government may cease to exist, so the existence or non-existence of the Legation has no effect whatever upon the consul's powers and influence: rather the reverse in each instance. In the one case the local government saves its money from Peking clutches; in the other the local consul saves pen and ink, and the trouble of filing unimportant documents.

The duties of consuls in China are, as I have said, much more complicated and extensive than those of consuls anywhere else; *i.e.* they are liable to be so, for in some instances the duties are almost a sinecure; it is only in Turkey, Siam, Corea, and such places that the consul possesses anything like the same extent of power. His correspondence register shows that he treats with quite a number of independent chiefs. In matters of accounts he deals direct with the Foreign Office alone, the "accounts" of the Legation referring to mere local allowances, promotions, shipments of baggage, and so on. In important general cases the Foreign Office receives a copy of the despatch sent to the Legation, or *vice versa*. In legal matters his sole superior is the Chief Justice at Shanghai, to whom appeal lies from his "provincial" decisions; he also has the benefit of the Crown Advocate's advice (if he is disposed to ask for it). In shipping matters the Board of Trade is his sole master, and in some consulates this work is no sinecure. These are the only authorities possessing the right to "instruct" him. But in emigration matters the Governor of Hongkong has much to say of an

authoritative kind; the Viceroy of India can "move" the consul pretty strongly if that potent personage desires information on opium matters; so can the governors of Singapore and Hongkong in matters of extradition, piracy, etc.; and even the Shanghai Deputy of the First Commissioner of Works can give him "pin-pricks" and reminders if he waxes too high and mighty about his household arrangements.

The consul's religious duties vary according to locality; he may have to conduct burial services, or even to preach a sermon. Touching his relations with the Chinese, the consul's official visits strongly resemble those exchanged by his superiors with the Tsung-li Yamên, except that there is more ceremony and formality, and the consul invariably puts on uniform and goes in a "chair." The viceroy, governor, *Hoppo*, *taotai*, or prefect, as the case may be, is just as ready to discuss the weather as the "Government" is; but the consul has this important advantage over the Minister, that the local officials *do* occasionally want something from the consul, whilst the Tsung-li Yamên never under any circumstances wants anything from the Minister beyond the incontinent sight of his back. The viceroy and his kind really possess infinitely more power and means to use that power than does the Tsung-li Yamên. In the same way, the consul really possesses more practical authority and better means of using it, than does the Minister; for amongst other things he possesses a gaol and a constable, and can easily with tact produce a gunboat at a pinch; whereas the Minister himself is under the municipal authority of the consul at Tientsin, and has to consult the Admiral's convenience for gunboats. If the consul and viceroy are humorously disposed, they may try to frighten each other by alluding to the terrible Mr. Jorkins, which each of them keeps stowed away in Peking; but a much shorter and a more sensible way is to make friends with the local officials, and patch up all squabbles in a give-and-take way. This was what old Sir Brooke Robertson always successfully did at Canton.

Now, such being the constitution of the elements of our "rule in the Far East," let us come to the point at once, and lay down—or rather submit—what is required:—

1. The condition of mind requisite for the successful

conduct of European diplomacy is unsuited to the East, just as it is unsuited in another sense to self-governing colonies. A suitable man must be found.

2. Having found a man equipped with the requisite mind for a Foreign Secretary, he ought to have ample exclusive authority over all the Ministers:—perhaps an exception might be made with the Minister to Japan, as she is now no longer “Asiatic,” but as good as any of us, and deserves to be.\*

3. All questions of accounts and auditing should be settled by an independent officer of rank, in London, direct with the Ministers and with the Consuls.

4. Both young diplomats (in view of their becoming ministers) and students (in view of their becoming consuls) should receive some sort of schooling in business habits, *i.e.* general habits of promptitude and common sense. No bank or great business house could hold its own if the managers were no better equipped with methodic brains than our average ministers, or if the clerks were no more competent business men than our average consuls.

5. The subjects treated of in despatches between the Secretary or Secretaries of State (there is no reason why both Foreign Secretaries should not be his superiors) and the Minister are quite sufficient to fill up the time of one man if he attends to them properly. It is much better to encourage consuls to act on their own initiative and to write as few despatches as possible; but if they must ask instructions, these instructions in cases of missionary “rows” and commercial disputes should emanate from the special *attaché* or *attachés* affected to that class of case, who would naturally require the rank of Secretary of Legation or Minister Resident, in order to give them requisite authority.†

6. In the winter time, when the north is ice-bound, it is quite as near from, say, Pakhoi to London as it is from Pakhoi to Peking. It is a question whether it would not be just as well for consuls to deal directly with the Foreign Office alone in most cases, as does the consul in Manila; and it is also a question whether both acting and substantive appointments and promotions should not come from the

\* She has since become our ally.

† We now have *attachés*.

Foreign Secretary, as is the case with the French consuls, instead of from the Minister at Peking, or at his suggestion. By all means let him advise, but do not let him job. China is too far off to be kept well under the restraining eye of the home departments, and if there happens to be a misunderstanding between officers of different rank unacquainted with each other, there is considerable risk of occasional injustice being done under the present system.

In making these few suggestions, I only express the opinion, from what I have myself seen and experienced—that a good shaking up is as much a necessity with at least one other of our civil services as it is with the Army. In questions of this sort there is a tendency on the part of persons for the time being responsible to pooh-pooh the whole matter, and to resent any change or interference; but whilst there is no necessity for excessive zeal, and perhaps no great urgency for immediate change, it is as well to remember that we are all in the same boat. Public servants—Secretaries of State included—are our servants; but when we endow them with official authority, they become for certain purposes temporarily our masters. No one wants to breed up a race of meddlesome zealots, of indefatigable studious prigs, or of heart-searching bookworms; but the public has a right to expect that it gets fair value and prompt attention for its money. It has been seen how the business abilities of such men as Mr. W. H. Smith, Lord Cross, Mr. Asquith, Mr. Goschen, and Mr. Chamberlain have infused life into our Cabinets; no doubt their example has had many salutary and permanent effects upon the subordinates of their respective departments. Our Empire and our population are growing every day, and there is too much inclination to go on using the old-fashioned low-power machines or “donkey-engines” of old days, to work ever-increasing cargoes and speed, instead of adopting the latest (so to speak) hydraulic and electric appliances at once. The material is good enough no doubt; so is our Army material. We cannot be any the worse for more business brains and organizing power in the management of our multitudinous external affairs.\* The country justly recognizes its great

\* See Mr. Balfour's reply to Lord Charles Beresford on this point.



debt to Lord Salisbury, whose success both at home and abroad is as much due to the excellent main principles proclaimed and followed by him as it is to the fact of his being a great noble. But it is totally impossible for Lord Salisbury to look into everything, or even to inspire everything with his example, and I am glad to see, since I began this, that he has already transferred part of his labour on to another man's shoulders.\* The utmost he, or any other single mind, can do is to stave off minor troubles and tackle the most urgent. But this is not as it should be. A good bank balances its books every night, and a well-organized Foreign Office ought to have all its work done every day; or at least it ought to have it and keep it in train towards being done as soon as possible. What gives the latter-day Germans so many advantages over us is that they have first learnt our business habits from us, and have then improved on what we taught them; they are rapidly becoming our masters, both in diplomacy and in commerce, chiefly because they have trained themselves to business habits, and therefore know how to "make a good job" out of what they do.†

\* With excellent results.

† Lord Rosebery's "efficiency."

## BOOK VI

### MANDARIN OR OFFICIAL

#### CHAPTER I

##### THE WAY CHINA IS GOVERNED

[*Note to original issue of November, 1898.*—This article was in type before the recent *coup d'état* took place, but a historical account of the last two Imperial successions is added at the end.]

THERE is a great deal of cheery human nature about the Emperors of China, and the Manchu Emperors especially have been very good fellows, taken all round. The first was a mere youth when his uncle, Torkun, took Peking, and he left no particular impress of character upon the times. On one point, however, he put his foot down firmly ; his Empress offended him, and, despite the entreaties of his Confucianist mentors, he quickly got rid of her. The second Emperor reigned over sixty years, and lived a blameless, busy life, embittered only by the undutiful conduct of two of his sons, one at least of whom was either a Christian himself or had intrigued with the Christians. The third Emperor was a thoroughly conscientious prince, but easily hoodwinked by sanctimonious quacks and charlatans. The fourth was one of the most brilliant monarchs that ever sat upon any throne ; he started off by bundling out all the alchemists, priests, and philosophers whom his father used to patronize ; reigned for sixty years almost without a single day's illness ; took his pleasure ; wrote poems ; made things lively amongst his viceroys and generals, and generally raised the prestige of China to its very highest point. With the fifth Emperor degeneration set in. The sixth was a well-meaning but

obstinate man, under whom Europeans first got in the thin end of the wedge. The seventh was a contemptible debauchee, whose summer palace "the Allies" burnt about his head, whilst he himself slunk off to Tartary. The last two Emperors have been mere youths, and even if they had or have any character to develop, they have been obliged to take quite a back seat during the life of the Dowager-Empress. Moreover, the present Emperor's position on the throne is decidedly shaky from a "proper" point of view; he is the cousin of the last one, and the first of the Manchu monarchs who has not been a son of his predecessor. By some adoption jugglery (which the Board of Rites only can explain), not only is he made the son of his cousin's father; but his own son, if he ever has any, is to count as his predecessor's son. Hence one at least of the last two Emperors must be left "orbate," and the ghost will literally "play the devil" with his corpse. This *raison de la sinrazon* so puzzled the Quixotic mind of a crack-brained censor in 1878, that he actually foretold therefrom the collapse of the dynasty, and then committed suicide. It is the vigorous old Dowager who is partly responsible for all this confusion; for her sister married the real father of the present Emperor, and naturally she wishes to be the "mother" of as many Emperors as possible, and to keep all the good things in the tribe of Nala. Moreover, special care has always been taken by the Dowager that the present Emperor should have no such opportunity as his predecessor took, to marry "morganatically" before his formal matrimony to a girl of the Nala tribe. The result, so far, has been that the widow of the last Emperor died conveniently soon after her husband's decease, and the present Emperor has not \* yet had any children at all—at any rate, no sons. Although the Dowager-Empress is nominally in the background, and is supposed to live in otiose retirement at "The Park," the Emperor has to show her very great deference, and every now and then a decree appears in *her* name, which proves that she is still powerful; for instance, when the veteran anti-foreign statesman, Li Hung-tsao, died the other day, she had her own say on the subject of his merits, in addition to what the Emperor said. She herself

\* It is now said, "cannot."

has a pedigree which is far from being of the bluest. When the seventh Emperor came to the throne, his *confarreatio* wife was already dead, and, in accordance with "doctrine," she received the posthumous rank of Empress (in heaven); but the following year a wife of subordinate rank, belonging to the Niukuru tribe, was made Empress (in the flesh); and after waiting for it to be seen which of the *coemptio* wives won the race for a son, the present Dowager, a lady of the palace who had given birth to the future eighth Emperor, was in 1856 promoted from the category of "handmaids" (*pin*), and patented with the higher rank of "queen-consort." In 1858 an ingenious arrangement was invented which appears to have no precedent whatever in "doctrine." The queen-consort was raised to the rank of "Empress of the West," in contradistinction to her senior colleague of the East, who ranked with, but before, her. For many years after the eighth Emperor's accession in 1862, these two Dowagers acted together as Regents, but it was always understood that the Western Empress really pulled the strings. The ninth Emperor succeeded in 1874. In 1881 the Eastern Empress died, and the Western shone by her own unreflected light. On the coming of age (in his sixteenth year) of the present or ninth Emperor, the Dowager made a great show of abandoning power, but it was generally understood that this was a mere prelude to her continuing it; over and over again it was pointed out to her where lay her duty and the interests of the Empire, and very possibly she would have, coyly, "whilst vowing she would not consent, consented," had not the busybodies stopped pressing her just at the last and right psychological moment. Notwithstanding this, the Dowager's influence remains very great; for, besides having a "party" of her own, she has the right by law to interfere in all matters connected with the Emperor's wives, which practically makes the forthcoming of sons dependent upon her goodwill. Besides, she takes precedence of the Emperor on all solemn occasions, and he is obliged to make periodical visits to inquire about her "warmth and cold." In a word, admitting that the Emperor is an able man and well disposed, nothing can be done so long as he and his "mother" fail to pull together. The fourth Emperor—a long-headed man—

understanding all this, used to carry his mother about with him all over Tartary and China, even on his hunting expeditions ; he did this systematically up to her death at the age of eighty-six. But the present Manchus are not of the fibre and nerve of the early stock, and, instead of shooting tigers in Manchuria for a pastime, they are apt to dally with the opium pipe or with their women in the harems of Peking. No one but his "mother" and his women really knows much of the present ruler of China, except that he is stated to be sensitive, highly educated, hot-tempered, apparently anxious to learn, and evidently chafing under the watchful supervision of his mother's party. So far, his decrees give no evidence whatever of a commanding will ; but within the last few days he would seem, from the telegrams received, to have asserted himself.\*

The Manchus, as a body, really do not care very much about Confucius, though it is part of their policy to make a great show of deference ; just as the great Napoleon found it desirable to conciliate the Popes. Of course, I am speaking of the genuine typical Manchus, who are fast dying out and becoming imitations of Chinamen, but without a Chinaman's suppleness and brains. The true Manchu has an honest contempt for "writing fellows ;" he has long since forgotten his own language, and now speaks a rough, energetic, bastard Chinese, called Pekingese, with a good, honest, country burr. It bears much the same relation to "literary Chinese" that Hindustani does to Sanskrit ; or, better still, that the Viennese dialect does to high German. The Emperor of China on formal occasions, descanting on funerals, Confucius, filial piety, and so on, is like Dr. E. J. Dillon's caricature of a French President descanting on "right, civilization, and justice." The real human Manchu Emperor making broad jokes in the rough Peking brogue, cracking melon-seeds and puffing at his water-pipe withal, may be compared with his Majesty the Emperor Franz-Joseph at informal times, with a feather in his hunting-hat, and a tankard of Pilsener beer before him ; smoking a strong Italian *Avana da quindici* with a straw run through it, and exchanging repartees with his private intimates in piquant Viennese.

\* It turned out, with disastrous results.



The Manchus like sport, good living, and fresh air ; they neither care nor profess to care very much about the Chinese Empire, except in so far as it is a big elastic sponge out of which can be squeezed, at suitable intervals, a rich nutriment. The one exception is, or was, the Emperor, who during the first four reigns took a keen pleasure, as well as a pride, in running the vast machine as economically and as uprightly as possible : and even now there is a considerable quantity of good, manly leaven in Manchu mankind, just as there is in any other mankind ; and it is this minority of good men which keeps things going ; not to speak of the leaven of good in the Chinese or Confucian element, which combines well with the excellence still left on the Manchu side ; even as in the United States the understratum of solid worth in party life keeps things sufficiently afloat in the Serbonian bogs of Populism and Tammany Hall.\*

During the summer of 1897 the Dowager-Empress gave one or two garden-parties. Her brother-in-law, the late Prince Kung† (the Emperor's uncle), stood by her side as her henchman, and several farces were acted before the company. Besides the ordinary paper lanterns, the electric light was introduced for the first time ; the chief of the *tatan* (certain "male" officials in attendance on harem duty in Eastern countries) introduced the leading statesmen in turn to the Empress, who was graciously pleased to "accord rice." After this banquet they were conducted "in fish line" (Indian file) round to the theatre, the Empress herself being carried in an eight-bearer open chair, wearing her "easy costume." Only forty-six persons were allowed to sit, and only two of these on stools. As to the other forty-four, it is presumed they sat on what the Shah of Persia once told a British Minister to sit, when his Excellency, looking round, inquired : "On what am I to sit, your Majesty ?"

The Dowager-Empress makes things very uncomfortable for the *tatan* if they do not behave themselves, and in fact for the dukes and princes too. Just before the above-described garden-party, the Archduke Tsaishu received eighty blows of the heavy bamboo. A *tatan*, perhaps in connection with the same scandal, was deliberately flogged to death at her

\* Now, apparently, things of the past.    † His grandson succeeded him.

express command, nominally for receiving private guests within palace precincts.

The Emperor himself has a very hard time of it. He has to be in his council-chamber at 3 a.m. every morning to receive reports and despatches. Those he agrees to are marked with a peculiar scratch made with an ivory paper-knife, or he writes a rescript with red ink. These early hours are very trying to the more aged of the statesmen, who have always to be at the Front Gate of Peking shortly after midnight. Each public office has its fixed days in rotation for audience and introductions. Only viceroys, governors, generals, and a few other provincial officials of high rank receive their appointments direct from the Emperor; and of course there is considerable competition for these, and many unkind things are said of the way in which they are obtained. First of all the Board has to be squared; then the *tatan* department; the princes; and those who have the *entrée*. But all this is mere hearsay; and in any case, if bribery or corruption affects important appointments—as it undoubtedly does occasionally, at least—the Chinese (and Manchus) are much too sharp to let the man in the street know exactly how the thing is managed. I prefer to judge by what the decrees of former strong Emperors specifically tell me. Even then there were cabals at court; statesmen, sometimes honest ones, were occasionally caught asking favours of the *tatan*, and *tatan* were detected introducing their friends for provincial posts under the wing of statesmen. The fourth Emperor, during epidemics of corruption, took the heads off at least 25 per cent. of his most prominent provincial officials, either for bribery, speculation, false charges, treason, or other heinous offence. Under the present comparatively degenerate rulers it is reasonable to suppose, from the rarity of punishment in high circles, that corruption is more universal, and is seldomer denounced. Yet, in spite of that, the viceroys and governors of *most* provinces are good men, and, moreover, men whom “all the world” expects to see promoted. Some provinces have governors and no viceroys, others viceroys and no governors; others, again, viceroys *and* governors, variously distributed. A certain number of these posts are manifestly given to Manchus of whom no one out

of Peking ever heard, simply because they are Manchus, and usually relatives or favourites of the Empress or some powerful prince ; but, owing to the way in which Manchus juggle with their borrowed Chinese names, it is never possible for an outsider to say whose son a given Manchu is. No Manchu prince ever visits the provinces now ; the visit to Tientsin and Chefoo of the Emperor's father in 1886 was quite an exception, as is also the coming visit to Tientsin of the Emperor and his mother.\* But very few high posts are given to Manchus, compared with what used to be the case under the strong Emperors of last century, who manipulated all the provincial strings for themselves. Whether it be that Manchu brain capacity is now rarer, or that degenerate Manchus cannot be trusted away from Peking by a weak Emperor, or that Confucianism is reasserting the right of Chinese to a full share of the high offices, the fact remains that such important posts as Canton, Nanking, Tientsin, Kashgaria, Hankow, etc., are almost always in the hands of strong representative Chinamen, corrupt or otherwise. There is † one Manchu Viceroy at present in Yün Nan, but he (apart from any family influence) seems to be an able man who has worked his way up. The one Manchu Governor ‡ (Kiang Si province) is, I believe, a connection of the Empress-Dowager, as was also his brother and predecessor, who was at last dismissed for corruption. I knew the latter when he was treasurer at Hangchow. Within the past few weeks the exceedingly able Manchu General Junglu§ has been appointed to Tientsin in place of the somewhat indecisive Wang Wên-shao.

In addition to the viceroys and governors, there are at Canton, Foochow, Hangchow, and at other places less known to Europeans, high officials called Tartar-Generals, who rank above even the Viceroy, and are in command of degenerate Manchu garrisons, or Chinese " banner " garrisons assimilated to Manchus. These high officers, together with their assistant-generals, are of course Manchus—occasionally Chinese " bannermen "—and form a sort of check on the Viceroy. When I was at Canton in 1874, the Chinese Governor joined the Manchu General in impeaching the Manchu Viceroy, who

\* It never took place.    † *I.e.* was.    ‡ Now at Canton.    § Now dead.

had taken a false step directly he arrived. The highest provincial post is undoubtedly the viceroyalty of Nanking, which has under it three governorships ; not only the ablest, but also the most honest Chinamen are almost invariably appointed to this post. For instance, within my own time, first there was the Mussulman Viceroy, Ma Sin-i, who was assassinated ; then the Marquis Tsêng's father, the highest type of Chinese statesmanship in modern times ; then Shên Pao-chêng, a relative of the notorious Commissioner Yeh, and the proud destroyer of the first Wusung railway ; then Tso Tsung-t'ang, the conqueror of Kashgaria ; then the Marquis Tsêng's uncle ; and, finally, the energetic Chang Ch'ung-tung, and the present cautious Liu K'un-yih.\* But though this is the highest post of honour, it is by no means the most lucrative post ; nor, in fact, are any of the great viceroyalties (except, perhaps, that of Sz Ch'wan, with its population of 60,000,000 or 70,000,000) given with a deliberate view to favour and speculation, although a corrupt officer may rapidly accumulate a fortune in any one of them. The highest post which is admittedly corrupt is that of "Hoppo," or Customs collector, at Canton. Like his colleague of New York, this officer is notoriously expected to make his fortune. He is invariably a Manchu of the "bondsmen" class, and makes no profession of consulting the people's welfare. Another "pocket berth" is that of the Tartar-generalship of Foochow, curiously enough entrusted with the collection of native Customs. I do not propose to weary the reader with an enumeration of strange names ; suffice it to say that there are about ten viceroyalties, twenty governorships, six Tartar-generalships, twenty chief treasurers, twenty chief judges, twenty Chinese generals, a dozen Tartar assistant-generals, three Imperial purveyors, and a number of Manchu Customs collectors. These offices, together with the high department billets at Peking, form the chief prizes of officialdom. Not a single one draws any salary from Peking : all are paid from the provincial treasuries, or by their own efforts ; and the Peking Government takes no cognizance of their finance except in a general way, so long as it can "appropriate" sums to the public service from the admitted totals.

\* Died 1903.



China is a curious mixture of excessive centralization and excessive decentralization. Things are so arranged that all the capillaries send their venal contributions through ever-enlarging channels to the heart at Peking, where a depurative process takes place, and whence arterial demands for more are disseminated over the provinces. Fatty degeneration of the heart and obstinate aneurisms or cloggings all along the line of circulation have, however, of recent years sadly interfered with the smooth working of this admirable theoretical system.

To begin at the very bottom of the tree. There are about 30,000,000 registered cultivators in the Empire, and (at present low silver rates) the nominal taxes do not much exceed 30,000,000 half-crowns, or, say, four millions sterling in all. It must not be imagined that 30,000,000 registered cultivators represent only 30,000,000 owners. It will suffice for present purposes to explain that, when the land-tax was made immutable 180 years ago, all transfers of property were in future to be so arranged in a "fish-scale register" that every increment or change should fit into one of the then existing "scales." Now, as silver is too valuable a commodity, even at its present price, to be handled by a community which dines for a halfpenny and counts in tenths of a farthing, it has always been the custom to rate the silver in brass coins; and the result has gradually come to be that in the mildest cases twice the real sum due is officially paid, whilst in harder instances four, five, and even ten times the nominal land-tax is extorted. Then there is the 10 per cent. or 15 per cent. extra for waste, a fee for the collector's receipt, and many another "local" charge, charity, compensation, or other "squeeze" superadded. Roughly speaking, it may be said that the district magistrate (a functionary corresponding to the French prefect of department, who keeps the registers) collects three times the tax due, and is besides, as a matter of policy, always slightly in arrear officially. Thus he has at least twice the amount of the real land-tax to keep for himself. Of course the value of each such prefect's berth is well known to the official body, and the average amount which he may keep for himself varies from £500 to £5000 a year, according to its situation and pedigree. The rest of the money extorted goes partly into the pockets of the



prefect's police force, partly in birthday presents and bribes to his superiors, and partly in the legitimate expenditure upon official state. Salaries are paid out of the recognized official portion. Each of the twenty provinces contains from fifty to a hundred of these prefects, and each prefecture-general has from five to ten prefectures (or, as Europeans usually call them, districts) under it; thus every province has about ten prefectures-general with city residences of the first class. All orders from and to the prefects have to be conveyed through the prefect-general, who is a mere channel of communication, and has no original jurisdiction; at the same time a prefect-general may occasionally have some other lucrative office as a plurality. In addition to this, each province has two or three circuit-intendants, each with several prefects-general under him. This intendant, unlike the prefects-general and prefects, each of whom has a walled capital of his own, is a comparatively modern excrescence, and may have his residence in any city or port, according to what special extra duty he has to perform. Next above the intendants come the provincial judge and the provincial treasurer. All matters appertaining to law come from the prefects (through the prefects-general and intendants) for a rehearing up to the former, and all financial matters up to the latter. Promotion business is handled by the two jointly, and practically it may be said that these two are the under-managers or business-managers of each province. At one time, indeed, the treasurer was the highest official; but about four centuries ago it was the custom to send eunuchs "on tour," and these "tourist pacificators"—as they are still called—gradually developed into permanent governors. Later on, in order to check the power of the new governors, viceroys (or, more correctly, governors-general) were appointed to act with, but over, the governors.

Now, as stated, some provinces have a governor and no viceroy; others a viceroy but no governor; others, again, both. Gradually a custom has grown up under which, where both exist, part of the work is initiated by the viceroy and part by the governor, and each may address the throne singly in his own sphere. Thus at Canton the viceroy specially deals with foreign affairs, with naval and military matters;

at Nanking with the Salt Gabelle, arsenal, army, and navy. In all provinces the governor's speciality is to deal with local administration. Most matters require joint action on the part of viceroy and governor, and in these the two are usually supposed to act (except in special spheres) "on the proposition" of the treasurer and judge.

Now we have a clear course before us, and can form some sort of an idea how the race for wealth is conducted. We have already explained how the viceroy and governor are appointed by the Emperor, more or less under the influence of the State Departments at Peking, according to the character of each monarch. Even if the provincial ruler's character is not perfectly well known, a good deal is found out during his progress from Peking to the provinces: his "appetite" is gauged; his temper tested. According to rule, he is obliged to furnish his own palace; but in practice the district magistrate does this vicariously at his own expense. Here comes the first local opportunity of conciliating the great man and his crowd of followers. The first important question, then, is, who is going to be master, the viceroy or the governor? The celebrated Ts'ên Yüeh-ying (the supposed destroyer of Margary) was, even when treasurer, always master of both viceroy and governor; when governor, he invariably overbore the viceroy. Of masterful viceroys we have at present Chang Ch'ung at Hankow, before whom every one must give way. More passively master is (*i.e.* was) the wary Liu K'un-yih at Nanking. But not only must viceroys and governors either work loyally together or fight out the supremacy question; the governor or viceroy is often himself a mere tool in the hands of his family or of designing secretaries. The position of the treasurer and judge is too strong (receiving as they do their opportunities from the Emperor) for them to care much for either viceroy or governor, so long as they themselves act according to law; and as they both have the right to address the Emperor direct if the viceroy or the governor acts improperly, they may be practically said to be on equal terms with their superiors. Hence, as these latter are supposed to act "on the proposition" of their next subordinates, it requires *du nez fin* to discover in any given case whether the viceroy and governor (or each singly) are to be masters of the treasurer

and judge, or *vice versa*. The intendant is "in the running" to be a judge; and yet, in a way, he is only a sort of superior prefect-general, but without the territorial authority; hence, as he has no power to recommend the removal of a prefect, the prefect does not fear him much, and the prefect-general not at all. Both of them, however, have to report all matters of importance to viceroy-governor, treasurer-judge, and intendant; but the intendant *reports* only to viceroy-governor, and *consults* on equal terms with treasurer-judge. He is what the Chinese call a "guest" official—a sort of outsider with supervisory powers only; just as a major in the Army has a kind of floating position without any specific body under his own permanent command.

Practically, therefore, it comes to this, other things being equal, and there being no overbearing talent on either side: Prefects (having, of course, in the first instance, squared Peking, when necessary) must pay immediate court to the treasurer and judge, if they wish these officers to keep their bare "rights" before the governor; and they must take care not to offend the governor if they wish him to recognize their bare rights. For favour beyond bare service rights there must be influence, great services, or cash. Ancient traditions have made Chinese high officials very loyal to each other, and consequently a prefect who offends a viceroy or governor, in most instances practically offends both. The prefect (or district magistrate) is, however, the *ultima ratio* of Government at its bottom end. His city is the same as our "county town." His court is that of the first instance for all matters whatsoever. His very name, *hien-kwan*, or "district-ruler," is used metonymically, exactly as in India we use the term *sirkar*, or "the Government." He represents the Emperor, and is every way an Imperial officer. The prefect-general's capital is often also his capital; for there is no such thing as a prefect-general's city,—apart from the prefect's city or the prefects' cities which form the units of the larger jurisdiction, one or more of which must be at head-quarters. All cities, even Peking, are in the last degree *hien*, and occasionally the same walls (as capital of a prefecture-general) contain two or even three *hien* capitals. Thus, at the provincial capital of Canton, the viceroy of two provinces,

the governor, treasurer, and judge of one province, salt intendant for two provinces, prefect-general, and two prefects, all have their "palaces," or *praetoria*, within a few yards of each other, not to mention the Tartar and Chinese military authorities, the Tartar Customs, and so on; and the city of Canton is made up of the two prefectures or magistracies of Namhoi and P'unyü, each with its jurisdiction.

The ill-gotten gains from the land-tax, which may be put down at £8,000,000 a year, in addition to the £4,000,000 officially collected (half of which last is often short), divided between, say, 1500 prefects, or officials assimilated to such, would leave from £4000 to £6000 for each prefect, wherewith to lubricate the machine above him. If all his superiors are honest (a very remote contingency), he soon makes a fortune for himself. If he blunders, some of his gains must go towards mollifying Peking, or to the local capital; or, in short, to whoever can get him off best. If his superiors are corrupt, he must find out *which* are corrupt, and get at them in the recognized way: either by inserting bank-notes in a book, or by squaring the gatekeepers, secretaries, sons, or whoever it is who keeps the books. The prefect-general cannot injure him so long as he acts prudently; nor can the intendant: his policy with these two is negative and defensive.

It must be explained that he himself has to keep a large staff of secretaries, police, clerks, etc., and he has under him a number of sub-prefects and assistant sub-prefects in smaller towns or in large markets and unwall'd cities; each of these sub-magistrates has a "palace" (a sort of superior stable) and a small staff, but very little power or "squeezing" opportunity. They do not fear him, nor need they bribe him, as he has nothing to do with their promotion. Below the four or five sub-officers and assistant officers come the village headmen, who may be described as the finest of the capillaries, giving out but minute doses of arterial government, and absorbing only small drops of venous or venal matter. To avoid responsibility the people usually elect a penniless wretch as "headman"—a sort of whipping-boy. The first great conduit is the *hien*, or prefect, who is the true backbone and vitalizing essence of the whole system; and though his



superiors all live on him, they are all afraid of him if he is an able man; for a bold, unscrupulous *hien* can get up a popular riot, force the town to "close shops," and call down Imperial vengeance on even viceroys if they fail to maintain order, or if they show too scandalously the cloven foot of greed. This specimen opening sentence of a proclamation, or despatch, will give an idea of how Government works practically in China:—"The prefect has received the following from the prefect-general, through the intendant, addressed jointly by the treasurer and judge, who have been honoured with the directions of their Excellencies the Viceroy and Governor, recipients of a despatch from the Foreign Board, setting forth a Council Order, embodying the Emperor's decree, etc."

The Emperor perhaps mentions a missionary riot, brought to the notice of the Foreign Board by a European Minister acting on the representation of a consul, who complains of the prefect's conduct. Each of these authorities in turn directs the lower one what to do, and nothing ever is done until it reaches the *hien*. He then makes up his story and sends "identical notes" to the prefect-general and all the others above him. The prefect-general endorses the "petition" in stereotyped or vigorous terms, according to his character, and winds up by saying, "You will at the same time await the instructions of the treasurer-judge-intendant." In due course he gets these too (each officer acting after or without consultation with superiors or equals), winding up, in turn, "but you will at the same time await the commands of their Excellencies." Here is where the "master-hand" shows: whichever excellency is a man of action comes out squarely with definite instructions; but, as an act of courtesy, adds: "Yet you will also await the commands of his Excellency the Viceroy (or Governor)." If the one who volunteers to direct is a good, capable man, which he often is, the business is settled at once, and in due course the whole *dossier* goes up to Peking, and thence comes down to the consul direct from his own superiors and "across" from the intendant, who quotes everything in full. It is quite unnecessary to read nine-tenths of a Chinese "despatch in reply." One sentence nestling in the middle, between the "sends" and the



"receives," contains the whole kernel, which is, "The chapel will be rebuilt," or, oftener, "The whole story is a Christian renegade's lie."

The Chinese archives are kept with wonderful scrupulosity. Though in most cases nothing is done, everything is in perfect order, and can be referred to at any moment for defensive purposes. The moment an honest man, be he low or be he high, attempts to disturb the even flow of "business" —*i.e.* the feathering of nests all round—he gets involved in a sea of correspondence and reports. Everybody instructs every one else to "inquire," and at the same time to "await the orders of" another man. Meanwhile (unofficially) the knowing ones arrange what shall be done, and the "cock of the walk" must be found : everything depends upon the crow of this important biped. After all, it is no worse than the lobbying and bossing of Tammany.

Once I had a "big case" on at the obscure prefecture-generalship of Wénchow. The prefect (district magistrate) was an able, courageous man, who really "ran" the whole town. I knew this before ; but it became painfully evident when I got the prefect, prefect-general, intendant, admiral, general, etc., all into my room, and found that they were a set of timid individuals whom the prefect deferentially manipulated as he chose. I was duly informed that "their Excellencies the Viceroy and Governor would have to consult with the treasurer and the judge, etc., etc." Forseeing months of weary correspondence and personal irritation, I took the prefect aside, and said : "Look here ! Never mind the Viceroy and the Governor ! Let us arrange the whole business ourselves. You make things right with the Viceroy, the Governor, the admiral, general, treasurer-judge, intendant-prefect-general, etc., and I will undertake to do the same with all the European Powers concerned." Every one who had an interest in the question at issue was delighted ; the intendant, admiral, etc., fixed their seals readily to our joint protocol ; we arranged the whole business in a few hours ; and after six or seven months quite a number of supreme Governments in due course "approved" the proceedings when we had almost forgotten the fact of their existence on record. This is the kind of *hien* who soon rises to be a viceroy.

In the above sketch I have said nothing of the salt revenue, which only concerns a limited number of officials ; nor of the native Customs, grain tax, *likin*, sale of titles, gambling monopolies, army "squeezes," and many other sources of revenue which go to swell the number of official prizes and qualify the above-described duties of this or that official. My intention has simply been to bring out as clearly as possible the main fact that in China the unit of Government is the *hien*, or prefecture, each of which is as large as a French department. The *fu*, or prefecture-general, is generally a hundred English miles square ; so that the 50,000 or 60,000 square miles taken up by half a dozen *fu* quite make up the area of a European kingdom as an average for each province. Eliminating the excrescences and counter-checks which have grown or been fathered from time to time upon the true system, we find that China is a huge body, the heart of which is at the Emperor's seat—now Peking. His pulsations, carried through a score of main arteries or provinces (each consisting of a composite organ, governor-treasurer-judge), are redistributed in lesser doses by this provincial triune entity to from fifty to a hundred city jurisdictions ; each of which again absorbs its nutriment (mere air) through minor channels, carries it through various intermediary organs to the province, whence it goes, after undergoing changes *en route*, back to the heart in the shape of cash. Some might reverse the metaphor, however, and say that the vivifying arterial blood goes in this instance to the heart, where it is corrupted and sent back for more sweetness and light.

The above was written some months before the recent "revolution" \* in the palace took place, concerning which it may be well to give some historical explanation. The debauched Emperor whose reign-title was Hien-fêng, died in the year 1861, leaving only one son, the first official year of whose reign (T'ung-chi) was 1862. At the time of Hien-fêng's death there were four of his younger brothers living, his three elder brothers having died before him. The fifth brother, Yitsung, left the family in 1845, when he was given in adoption to a childless relative called the Prince of Tun

\* Of 1898.

(second-class); he himself was made a first-class prince in 1860, and died some twenty years ago. The sixth brother was Yihin, Prince of Kung (first-class), who died this year.\* The seventh was Yihwan, Prince of Ch'un (second-class), who was subsequently promoted to first-class rank. The eighth and ninth brothers, Prince Chung and Prince Fu, have not made much history.

The present Empress-Dowager was a *kwei-jên* or concubine of the fifth rank, belonging to the Nara or Nala clan, until 1854, when she was raised to "named" rank and style "Concubine I." (*I-pin*). On the birth of Tsaichun (afterwards the Emperor T'ung-chi) in 1856, she was promoted to the rank of *I-fei*, or "Queen I."; and on the following new-year's day once more to that of *I-kwei-fei*, or "Queen-Consort I.," and this was her rank when the Emperor, her husband, died in the autumn of 1861. During the nominal reign of her son, she and her fellow but senior Queen-Consort acted as Regents, each with the title of Empress-Dowager, until the sudden death of T'ung-chi in 1874, without children. T'ung-chi's Empress was *enceinte* at the time, but it was arranged, after a good deal of family intrigue, that the above-mentioned Prince Ch'un's son Tsait'ien should be given in adoption to the deceased Emperor Hien-fêng, and thus succeed his cousin as a sort of younger brother by adoption.

Of course the question arose: "If the same generation is to succeed, why not take a son of the next eldest brother, the Prince of Kung?" There were two answers to this. First of all, Prince Kung's sons were too old; and, secondly, Prince Ch'un had married the sister of T'ung-chi's mother. The Censor Wu K'o-tuh pointed out the irregularity of these arrangements, foretold the fall of the dynasty therefrom, and committed suicide. This was, I think, in 1878, and a translation of the Censor's memorial appears in the *Hongkong Daily Press* for that year. Tsait'ien took the reign style of Kwang-sü, and the senior Empress-Dowager died in 1881. All the stories about palace murders, assassinations, eunuchs, etc., are largely guess-work or empty rumour; if there be any truth in them, it is kept a strict family secret.

Hwaitapu,† whose name recently appeared in the *Times*, is

\* 1898.

† Perished during "Boxer" troubles.

the eldest son of Jweilin,\* Viceroy of Canton, who died in 1874. K'ang Yu-wei is a *chu-shū*, or senior clerk, at one of the Peking Boards. Liang K'i-ch'ao, one of the "reformers" executed, is a *kü-jên* or graduate, who, with Sun Kia-nai and others, took a prominent part in recent changes. The true motives of the recent "revolution" are foreshadowed in a letter which appeared in the *Times* of September 6 last, and Li Hung-chang's supposed share in it has been misunderstood.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE LIFE OF A CHINESE MANDARIN

ALL *yamêns*, or official residences, are the same in principle; the only difference is in the roominess and number of the buildings, the extent of the pleasure-grounds, and the size of the vacant space in front. The largest I have ever seen are those of the Tartar-General and the Governor of Canton, both of which are better than the Viceroy's; but the greater part of the first-named was temporarily ceded to the British consul after the war of 1858-60, and I lived in it myself for two years.

The precincts of a *yamên* are invariably walled round, and the only entrance is on the south side. Over the gateway is a heavy tiled roof, and this tiled roof is supported in front by two strong poles resting on stones. The gates are of wood, and consist of three portions: the central portion, of two leaves, gaily painted with allegorical figures, is only used by the mandarin himself, his equals, or his superiors; the two side entrances, half the breadth of the central, by servants and officials of subordinate degree. If the *yamên* is a large one, there are two roofed orchestra boxes, one at each side of the entrance, and some 50 or 100 feet from it, outside; and, as the visitor enters in his palankeen, these orchestra boxes discourse sweet music in the shape of Chinese airs of the squeakiest description. If the visitor is entitled to a

\* See chapter on "Jweilin" in *John Chinaman*.

salute (never more, never fewer than three "guns"), three iron mortars are fired off by a man with a long stick, just as the visitor enters the gate. Military men are supposed to go on horseback, and in order to keep up this semblance of manliness often have their nag led behind the chair; but roundly speaking, it may be said that in these degenerate days all visits are made in chairs. I once paid a visit on foot, but the "etiquette" got so complicated—all the details being based on the assumption that you go in a chair—that I had to give up the innovation as impracticable.

One would have thought that, with so many doors, and a sedan chair welcomed by guns and music, the entrance of the visitor would have been a simple matter. But no; with Europeans the question is, or used to be, often raised, whether the middle door shall be opened at all; and, however carefully the appointment may have been made, the mandarin or one of his servants usually manages to keep the chair waiting for a few minutes, just to "take a rise" out of the visitor. During this *mauvais quart-d'heure*, all the boys and roughs in the neighbourhood congregate noisily, and make rude remarks; the chair-bearers, anxious to rest, support their burden on two groggy poles, which wobble about and threaten to collapse the whole machine. Meanwhile the fiend behind the door peeps through the niches at the visitor's discomfiture, and affects to wait until his master is ready and gives the word. At last a messenger in uniform runs down in hot haste, holding the visitor's "card" above his head as a mark of respect, and amid shouts, guns (and derisive cheers, if the guest is a foreigner), the chair is carried through the first two courts into the third, where the mandarin, surrounded by his servants, stands with his joined hands before his face in a deferential position.

But before describing the interview, we must return to the subject of chairs. For viceroys, governors, and other high civilians, down to the rank of *taotai*, the colour is green, and the bearers from four to eight, according to rank. Military officials, except those of the very highest rank, and lower civilians, ride in blue chairs, and may have fewer than four bearers; but every man paying official visits has a chair of some sort, even if it be only a mat-box on bamboo poles, carried by two ragged coolies.



The rag, tag, and bobtail suite, which must by law follow a mandarin's *cortège*, is very much to the distaste of foreigners, who accordingly move about in most undignified simplicity, from the Chinese point of view. But as nothing in China is ever done properly, and as, even if it could be, the servants would pocket the money appropriated to the suite, the usual result is that a number of beggars or street ruffians are hired for the day or "course" at a few pence each; they are then rigged up with strips of stuff, or coloured paper, over their rags, made to don the tall hat, particularly affected by lictors, and off they go. The smallest mandarins content themselves with a red umbrella and a couple of servants; there is a great range between this modest display and that of a viceroy, which is headed by two gong-bearers, and brought up by a motley crowd of banner-carriers, title-bearers, state umbrellas, mounted guards, changes of raiment, regalia-bearers, more gongs, fans, executioners, tall-hat lictors, bludgeons, bastinadoes, incense, road-clearers with whips, foot-guards—all the above in front; with eight soldiers and four servants to bring up the rear.

However, let us suppose that all difficulties about followers and chairs have been surmounted, and that the visitor has got safely through the first courts, where are the various offices and servants' quarters, up to the third, where the mandarin stands awaiting his guest. Very few words are exchanged. With a profusion of bows and protests, the visitor is gradually edged along to one of the reception-rooms, both host and guest meanwhile assuming an uneasy attitude of deference and expectancy, as though anxious not to take the first step at the cost of the other. Despite his own protests, the guest suffers himself to cross the threshold first; and if his position is one of equality, or, what amounts to much the same thing, if he is on a footing of guest and host, as distinguished from that of superior and subordinate, he approaches a kind of square divan, at the north side of the room, facing the door, which is always south. This divan, which is called a *k'ang*, and is artificially heated from within when the weather is cold, has just enough room upon it for two persons to sit down comfortably, with a dwarf table between them. The table has no cloth, and the straw cushions for the seats are

always covered with red baize. The servants at once place a covered cup of tea, standing in a pewter saucer, before guest and host, and the host rises to touch the guest's cup, so as to see that the cover is well on, and the tea actually brewing. Whilst he strokes the liquid tenderly with the cover, the guest protests vigorously that the honour is too great for him to bear, and rushes incontinently over to stroke the host's tea in the same way. It is not intended that this tea should be drunk; in fact, unless the day is very warm, and the interview long (and even in this case either the guest or the host must ask special permission to "waive ceremony"), it is an act of ill-breeding to taste the tea. If the interview lasts more than a quarter of an hour, the attendants take the tea away, and substitute fresh cups; and when the guest is ready to go, he raises both cup and saucer respectfully with both hands, bows towards the host, who does the same, and takes his departure. If the guest shows signs of being a bore, and if the host's rank is such that a broad hint may be given without offence, the host will drink tea first, which means that he expects the guest to go. All official visits, whether between foreigners and Chinese, or between Chinese themselves, involve full official costume. As the climate is hot in summer, and the European uniform is liable to get out of order, besides being uncomfortable, foreigners are apt to be a little lax, the more especially as the Chinese are often unable to distinguish between half dress and full dress, or even between private clothes and official costume: but amongst themselves they are very punctilious and strict. Mandarins of all ranks are usually richly clad, and even the poorest are "correct," though circumstances may sometimes compel them to be a little shabby.

But let us leave for a moment this special point of visit-paying, the details of which may become wearisome, and proceed to take the daily life of an average mandarin from the moment he rises to the instant of his retiring to rest. The private living-rooms of a Chinese official, in regular employ, are invariably in the last or hindmost court or courts of the *yamên*. If he is a viceroy or other exalted official, he may have two or three courts and a garden; but in most cases the "harem" consists of a fairly well-kept courtyard

surrounded with from four to a dozen sets of apartments. Into this private enclosure none of the official servants, writers, clerks, etc., ever enter, and the door is always in charge of what the Chinese call a "family man," *i.e.* either a confidential hereditary servant, or a slave, or a poor relation. In order to prevent the misuse of their official seal, it is the practice with many mandarins to leave it in the care of their mother or their chief concubine; and when it is necessary to apply it in the absence of the master, the secretary obtains what he wants through the agency of the "family man." No civil mandarin can serve in his own province, and it consequently results that every Chinese official is a "foreigner," in most cases even requiring an interpreter in his dealings with the local people. There is only one legitimate wife, and it is almost invariably the practice of those who can afford it to leave her at the ancestral home to look after family interests; a wife of the second class usually follows the mandarin to his official post, and to all intents and purposes she takes the position of legitimate wife. In fact, after the death of the latter she steps into her shoes: the present Empress-Dowager began her career as a handmaid in this way. It is the practice of Europeans to call these second-class wives "concubines;" but this is scarcely correct, for all sons are equally legitimate, and the difference in wifely rank lies more in form than in substance. The first or legitimate wife is married with full ceremony, as in the Roman *confarreatio*; the others usually by *coemptio*, or purchase. If a mandarin has—and he usually has—more than one wife living with him, each one is provided with a separate suite of apartments, and if (which is considered very good form) he has his mother or his grandmother living with him too, naturally each of these venerable ladies has her own apartment, and her private bevy of "slaveys." Of course, if the grandmother were there she would "rule the roast," and all the others would have to pay their respects twice a day; if the mother were the senior present, or if the legitimate wife should happen to be there, each of these would in order of rank occupy the post of honour belonging first of all to the grandmother. A man's wife has no rights except subject to those of his mother, and a man's concubine has no rights except

subject to those of his wife. No matter who is their real mother, all the sons have to regard the first wife as their legal parent, and they mourn at her death three times longer than for their natural mother. This is the theory ; but of course Chinamen are, like the rest of us, human, and the question of personal ascendancy may always come to the fore in unexpected ways.

When the mandarin first opens his eyes in the morning, it is in the apartment of one of his wives. A Chinese always sleeps with his clothes on—that is, he removes only the outer garments ; and having undone the waist-band, anklets, collar, and so on, retires to rest in his linen. The first thing is to clean his teeth, which is usually a long and noisy operation. In order to do this, he takes a large mug, a silver tongue-scraper, a brush, and often a bit of willow twig, and goes out into the courtyard to complete this part of his toilet. The lavatory arrangements, even in the case of a viceroy, are of the simplest description ; a small copper or brass basin rests upon a primitive stand like a folding chair, and whilst the master is spluttering and coughing in the courtyard, one of the "slaves" or handmaids (who sleep coiled up in various holes and corners under the beds, in the kitchens, passages, and outhouses) has already filled the copper basin with warm water and brought "the rag." Often and often have I enjoyed the luxury of the "hotel rag" in Chinese inns. This rag is a purely Chinese institution, and consists of an old dish-cloth dipped in boiling water. It is the exception to use soap, but occasionally a native preparation from tea-oil or a piece of pumice-stone is used. The mandarin rubs his head, face, neck, and hands with the family rag, ties his drawers at the ankles, hitches himself up generally, puts on a pair of silk leggings and a long robe, and his undress toilet is complete. The next thing is the tea and "piece of heart." Whilst the handmaids are scurrying about getting all these things ready for their master and mistresses, the mandarin gets hold of his copper-headed pipe and has a whiff or two of tobacco ; if he is energetic, he himself lights up with a paper spill or an incense stick, but more commonly a little girl stands by to perform this duty too. Now comes the tea and the "piece of heart," consisting of barley cakes, "oil" or



sponge cakes, sesame rolls, or sweet biscuits of some kind. After that he has another smoke, and meanwhile sends out word by his "family man" to get the sedan chair ready. All Chinese are early risers, and visits are invariably paid in the early part of the day, sometimes even before daylight. Of course, in the case of opium-smokers things are thrown out of gear generally, and the chief civil official in each town can set what rule he likes; but we are here only dealing with average mandarins. The official saunters out of the hindmost court with his pipe in his mouth, and proceeds to interview his secretaries, most of whom are already at work in their respective offices. These secretaries are always well paid, and practically "run the *yamên*." There are always at least six administrative divisions in a busy city *yamên*, and sometimes even more. There is the tax-collecting secretary, the punishment secretary—these two are the most important; the private-letter secretary, despatch secretary, works secretary, law secretary, and so on. These men throughout China belong to an hereditary order, and mostly hail from Chêh Kiang province. They keep as secret as possible the forms of correspondence, the inner wheels of the accounts, and the bribery ledgers, and form such a powerful combination that it is almost hopeless for a mandarin of merely average ability to work except under their guidance. If he is a sensible man, he at once falls in with "olo custom," and shares the plunder in good honest style. But it must here be mentioned that most mandarins at the outset of their career are in charge of a "belly-band." This belly-band is a usurious individual from Peking (though by no means always a Pekingese), who furnishes the wherewithal to purchase an outfit, make official presents, and defray the cost of proceeding to the first post in the provinces. Of course, if there are many grandmothers, mothers, and wives in the cavalcade, this becomes a serious matter; but the Chinese, and especially the Manchus, take an hilarious view of life, and set out with a light heart from Peking, bag and baggage, firmly resolved to make their pile in any way they can. The secretaries therefore have to reckon with the belly-band as well as with the mandarin, and as twenty per cent. is the very lowest interest a man can expect to pay in China,



the unfortunate mandarin often has a hard fight of it before he can get his head well above water. Moreover, if his father or mother or either of their parents dies, he has to retire immediately into private life for three years ; hence perhaps the custom of tending grandmothers so carefully under one's own eye.

Let us suppose, however, that the old ladies are in good health, the belly-band paid off, and affairs generally in a smiling condition. The mandarin carefully examines the accounts of the tax-collecting secretary, and (though this last is a much darker and mysterious business) the punishment secretary ; this functionary, it must be explained, issues the warrants, receives informations (often against rich persons), billets policemen upon persons of suspicious character (seldom very poor), etc., etc. The mandarin exchanges pipes, snuff, and compliments with his henchmen, allows his family men to robe him, and sallies forth in his palankeen to pay official visits ; in the case of city governors, not a single day passes but what a morning visit must be paid to the prefect, intendant, judge, treasurer, provincial governor, or viceroy, but as often as not the superior "blocks the chariot," *i.e.*, declines to receive the proffered visit. This, of course, is only in the provincial capitals. The fewer mandarins there are in a town, the more otiose does official life become, until (as I have often seen) in a remote country district we find perhaps only a city governor and a petty military commandant, both smoking opium all night and sleeping all day ; never seeing any one but their relatives and concubines ; and simply vegetating in slothful indolence, leaving everything to their secretaries, police, and family men, until the time shall arrive to retire with a fortune.

The round of official visits often lasts several hours. Our mandarin has to conciliate the secretaries, police, and family men of each superior, as well as the superiors themselves ; but it as often as not happens that a city governor of character will boldly take his superiors in hand and "run" the whole lot of them ; for in China a weak big man is often as afraid of an energetic small man as a corrupt small man is of an honest big one. The peculiar official life I have above described is, therefore, greatly complicated and varied by

the personal idiosyncrasies of each individual. It is by no means unusual in China for a mandarin to be honest; an honest viceroy may work wonders in a very few years, but an honest small man runs greater risks; for, though all his superiors are obliged to pretend to approve him—especially if the people have declared themselves in his favour—half of them are secretly longing for an opportunity to “smash” him; and, unless he is very wary, he is apt to be charged with lunacy, eccentricity, or “ordinariness of character.”

Well, after his round of visits, back comes the mandarin, flags flying, gongs beating, hungry and exhausted, to his *jamén*. The first thing he does after getting out of his chair is to pay his respects to his grandmother or his mother. The old ladies order up a bevy of girls, gruel is served, a few compliments exchanged, the official clothes are carefully removed and placed in boxes, the mandarin calls for his pipe, and preparations are made for dinner. Men almost always eat alone, and in any case it is not respectful for either a wife or a son to sit and eat in the master's presence. Though mandarins occasionally give expensive “feeds,” in which birds'-nests, sharks'-fins, sea-slugs, and other luxuries take a prominent part, still in their private life they are usually very simple. Even a viceroy will occasionally squat on his heels with a plain bowl of rice in his hand, and shovel it down with chopsticks like a common coolie. The usual course, however, is for the meal to be served in the “library”—so called from having no books in it—or other vacant apartment in the private court. There is never a regular “set” repast—no knives, spoons, or forks; no tablecloth, cruet-stand, mustard, pepper, salt, bread, or napkin. A large bowl of hot rice is set down on a tea-poy or book-shelf, another bowl containing soup or rice-water, with perhaps a pigeon's egg floating in it, and a couple of small saucers holding an ounce or two of pork, sour cabbage, salt duck, smoked ham, shrimps, etc., are placed near; the mandarin, placing a tiny morsel of tasty stuff on the end of his tongue to encourage the rice down and give it a zest, proceeds solemnly to shovel away. Occasionally he may take a glass or two of wine, or rather rice spirit, always served hot, but half a dozen of these would scarcely amount in bulk to a

single glass of our sherry. The meal usually winds up with a long pull at the soup or rice-water; then a few cups of tea, and a pipe or two, and finally a snooze, either in the library or in one of the concubines' rooms.

At 2 or 3 p.m. the mandarin shakes himself up again, and, if business is so moderate that he can afford to postpone the hearing of cases thus late, he robes himself and proceeds to the second or third court to sit as judge. Of course, in a busy city the mandarin has to hurry over his midday meal and go without a snooze; as I said before, it all depends upon how many superiors there are "knocking around." The "court" is literally a court; that is to say, it is a courtyard partly or entirely roofed in. The paraphernalia of justice consist, first, of a large table, perhaps ten feet by three, covered with a red cloth, or painted red: on this table are set black and red ink-slabs, brushes, and the other usual writing materials, besides a sort of hammer, with which the mandarin occasionally knocks on the table. Behind are what look like "stands of arms;" and indeed they are—they are stands containing spears, hatchets, and other strange objects usually carried by lictors. Every one addressing the court, be he plaintiff, defendant, or witness, must kneel; the only exceptions are official personages or those holding titular rank. There is no limit to the city magistrate's jurisdiction; it extends over all matters—civil, criminal, political, social, religious. In all cases sentence of death is pronounced by the city magistrate before the matter is taken to a higher court. The mode of procedure is, from our point of view, decidedly undignified. The magistrate speaks in a loud, impatient voice, abuses the accused, asks unfair and leading questions, goes into matters irrelevant to the issue, takes cognizance of hearsay, and, in short, outrages every sentiment of fairness and impartiality. It is beneath the dignity of a mandarin to speak publicly in any but one form or the other of the so-called "mandarin dialects." Hence, in order to maintain his position, an official will go through the form of having an interpreter for a language—sometimes almost his native tongue—he understands perfectly well. On one occasion I sat as assessor to a Manchu mandarin who spoke Cantonese perfectly. The witnesses were mostly

Cantonese, but the mandarin roared out his questions in Pekingese; they were interpreted in a corrupt southern mandarin dialect, through which medium, again, the Cantonese answers were returned. Things went on so unsatisfactorily that I at last conducted the examination myself in Cantonese, and, although the mandarin understood every word that was said, explained it to him in Pekingese. It need hardly be hinted that, what with secretaries, interpreters, taking down written depositions, and total absence of rules of evidence, the chance of obtaining justice is infinitely small where bribery is at work. An attempt to administer rough justice is, however, as often the rule as the exception. There is also another safeguard. The Chinese, if unscrupulous, are easy-going, and dislike pushing things too far. Thus, if a gaoler finds he really cannot squeeze any more money out of a prisoner, he usually treats him with reasonable humanity; if a "warrant-holder" has been billeted upon a family and sees clearly that he has ruined them, he generally leaves them enough to recommence in life. In the same way the "family men" and gatekeepers, through whom the bribes commonly pass, endeavour not to kill entirely the goose with the golden eggs. Unless political malignity or private spite is aroused, everybody manages to square everybody else, and things jog along pretty well. Still, the *jaméns* have such a villainous reputation, that most respectable people prefer to carry their disputes before a family or village tribunal; and, if these agree, the law takes no cognizance of any crime whatever, except treason against the State. In fact, the policy of the Government was cynically declared sixty years ago by the Emperor Tao-kwang, who said: "I wish my people to dread the inside of my *jaméns* as much as possible, so that they may learn to settle their quarrels amongst themselves."

Most mandarins pass the whole of their lives without taking a single yard of exercise. One of the late Nanking viceroys (father of the Marquis Tsêng) was considered a remarkable character because he always walked "1000 steps a day" in his private garden. Under no circumstances whatever is a mandarin ever seen on foot in his own jurisdiction. Occasionally a popular judge will try to earn a reputation by



going out incognito at night; but even then he takes a strong guard with him, and (as happened when I was at Canton) gets his head broken if he attempts to pry too closely into abuses. As the police and the thieves are usually co-partners in one concern, it naturally follows that caution must be used in attacking gaming-houses which have bribed themselves into quasi-legality. A mandarin's leisure, which may be said to begin at 5 p.m. and continue till 9, is spent in one or other of the following ways. Either he reads poetry by himself, or he sends for his secretaries to drink wine, crack melon-seeds, and compose poetry with him; or he may shoot off a few arrows at a target in his garden; or (and this is commonest) he may invite the rich merchants to a "feed" in his *yamén*, or accept invitations from them. But this is rather dangerous work, for there is a sort of unwritten law against mandarins leaving their own *yaméns*, except on official business bent; on the other hand, merchants of high standing steer clear of the local mandarin unless (as happened when I was at Kewkiang) he happens to be a compatriot of theirs. On his grandmother's, mother's, and wife's birthdays the mandarin receives congratulations and presents: of course on his own too. On these festive occasions he may give a play. In China, theatrical entertainments are commonly hired privately, though as often as not the "man in the street" is admitted gratis. But even here caution is required; for many days in the year are *nefasti*, on account of emperors having died on those anniversaries; and it goes very hard with a mandarin if he is caught "having music" on a *dies non*.

Chinese—always supposing they are not opium-smokers, invalids, or debauchees—retire to rest as early, compared with ourselves, as they rise. In most Chinese towns everything is quiet after sunset, and by seven or eight o'clock every one is either in bed or is simply crooning away the time until sleep comes on. Notwithstanding the recent introduction of kerosene lamps (forbidden in many large towns), the usual light is the common dip or the rush. Even supposing the mandarin were studiously inclined, and not worn out with the fatigues of the day, his eyesight would soon give way if he attempted to read regularly by such



wretched illuminants as these. Dinners and feasts cannot take place every day, so what happens on nine evenings out of ten is this: When the correspondence of the day has been read, drafted, archived, sealed, or despatched; when the secretaries have struck their balances and exhibited the profits on the day; when the business of the judgment-seat is at an end; the mandarin gets out of his robes, hat, collar, boots, chaplet, and feathers, into an easy costume, in which he looks just like the ordinary, frowsy, greasy tradesman; lights his pipe, and retires to the harem. After performing the proper obeisances to his grandmother or mother, he may take a platonic cup of tea or gruel with his wife, after which he selects the apartment of one of his concubines. He will even take his evening meal in her room, smoke a few pipes with her (for nearly all women smoke in China), and perhaps play a game or two at cards. The etiquette of these apartments is very strict, and there is no chance of a rival wife, a mother, or a grandmother bursting in at unseemly hours. As a matter of fact, the "slaveys" keep each of the women well informed as to what the others are doing, and what the master is doing; but it is as much as their lives are worth to be indiscreet; besides, if recommended by a mother or wife, each "slavey" has a chance of becoming a concubine herself in due time; and thus it is that, on the whole, harem life in China is pretty harmonious. A military mandarin of my acquaintance at Kiungchow was exceedingly communicative about his interior arrangements. He had seven wives, the chief of which was the legitimate one, and "ran" the whole *yamên*, including her husband and his regiment. I never saw her, but we were great official friends, and I used to send her presents of all kinds in order to secure her good-will. She kept the seal in her possession, bargained for the coal for the gunboats, arranged official matters with me in his absence, and generally made herself useful, and a credit to her sex. The inner life of her *yamên*, besides being freely communicated to me by her husband, used to filter through her servants to my servants; and at last, in one way or another, come round to me. Thus it is that my opportunities of knowing the mysteries of Chinese harem life have been slightly above the average.

## CHAPTER III

## WHAT'S IN A (CHINESE) NAME?

THIS question cannot be so summarily disposed of in the Far East as it is in most parts of Europe, where John the Smith, Alexander Nicolaivitch, and such-like appellations at once tell their own tale. In China, in names as in other matters, our ideas have to change their bearings; and just as we are astonished at the absolutely unanswerable discovery that the compass there is considered to point to the South, so we cannot possibly see any just cause or impediment why a man's surname should not in China come before his "Christian" name. And here we are at the outset plunged into a conflict of words. In French the word *surnom* has not quite the application we give to it; it means, like "Simon surnamed Peter," a "superadded name," either to the *nom de famille* or the *nom de baptême*; whereas in English it is evident that the surname, or superadded name to the Christian name, connotes the superior antiquity of the latter. If we run our eyes down the columns of a directory, we shall notice long lists of Smiths and Joneses, followed by the personal names of each individual Smith or Jones. This is, in fact, the only rational way of arranging them, and it is the Chinese way, both for grouping and for singular purposes. Thus, Li Hung-chang means "of the Li surname, the Vastly Manifest." At first sight this may seem to us rather a clumsy way of indicating his Excellency, who, however, it must be admitted, was certainly vastly manifest when he was in Europe; but if we examine Chinese personal names more closely, we shall see that they mean exactly the same thing as our own Saxon Æthelbald, Eadward, etc., etc. In fact, the word *edel*, or "noble," occurs in its Chinese form, both in male and female names, with just the same iteration as it did in the Anglo-Saxon, *i.e.* before Christianity was introduced into England to change the face of matters. The elder brother of the distinguished statesman who visited England three years ago is called Li Han-chang,\* which means precisely the same

\* Both brothers have since died.

thing as the other name, except that by a subtle turn of the pen, only possible in a language where writing appeals pictorially to the eye—which thus takes rank before the ear—the one vastness suggests the desert expanse, whilst the other hints at flocks of wild-geese, at a dizzy height, flying over the same desert.

It is a fancy with modern Chinese, especially with those of birth or of literary antecedents, to arrange that either the first or the second syllable of the personal name shall be the same with members of one generation. Thus not only have the two viceroys of the Li family got the word "manifest" tacked on to the end of their names, but it is highly probable, now that fame has overtaken two brothers, that all cousins in the same degree do, or will do, the same thing. In China "the same degree" is often extended in a way unfamiliar to us. I once met a boy of eighteen who was uncle to a man of fifty: that is, he was in the degree of uncle. If Smith has two sons, one twenty years younger than the other, and these two sons marry early or late, or one of them in his old age buys a couple of Hagers to cheer his declining years, it is evident that such caprices carried over a century or two will gradually produce curious results with future Smiths. But the *p'ai*, or degree, never varies. About twenty years ago, I was sipping tea at a roadside stall in the wilds of Kwei Chou province when I met a tolerably old man who said his family name was Tsêng. The very first question one stranger asks another is: "Your noble family-name?" Knowing that all persons of this name must be descended from the philosopher Cincius (Tsêng-tsz), of Confucius's time, and that the "Marquess" Tsêng was just then qualifying for the London legation, I then inquired and ascertained, in a round-about way, to what *p'ai* the old man belonged. He at once said: "I belong to the 'degree with the character *ki* in it;'" in other words, he was a cousin, hundreds of times removed, of Tsêng Ki-tsêh, afterwards minister to England. He told me that the main register of the family was kept in Shan Tung province, and that each other province where new cemeteries (*i.e.* independent branches) of the family had been founded, reported their births, marriages, and deaths to Shan Tung from time to time, and took their cue upon such

questions as that of degree names from the ancient village of the philosopher.

The father of the diplomatist was the celebrated Tsêng Kwoh-fan, who died about thirty years ago at his viceregal post, Nanking, and whose faithful support of the dynasty went far towards crushing the Taiping rebellion of 1850-1860. His equally worthy, but by no means equally able, brother Tsêng Kwoh-ts'üan died at the same official post about eight years ago. In this instance, it is the former and not the latter half of the personal name which rings the changes. In the one case it is Tsêng "the country's protection," and in the other Tsêng "the country's fragrance," the eye taking in the further poetical idea in one instance of trees forming the boundary enclosure of a march (*i.e.* a marquess), which protects the Emperor's outlying domains; and, in the other, of fragrant plants emitting perfect odours suggestive of purity and virtue. It is as though in pre-Christian times they were Saxons taking for family use a group of names such as Osbald, Osway; Æthelbert, Æthelred; or, to change the order of like syllables, Osbald, Æthelbald.

Nothing is more serious in China than the etiquette of *tabu*; so much so, indeed, that a man's official personal name is called his *tabu*, or "avoid"; and if, for business purposes, it be necessary to ask a mandarin's personal name, you say: "What is your honourable Avoid?" The private personal names of Emperors are so strictly tabooed that there has grown up quite a system of written character mutilation, destined, in various degrees, according to the temper of each sovereign, and the facility or difficulty of avoiding a given sign or sound in rare or common use, to accommodate this humour. It is as though her Majesty's name were so sacred that all subjects adopting it must write their own names "Wictoria"; or as though the personal name Jesus should never be used at all by private persons—as indeed seems to be the case all over Europe, except in Portugal and perhaps one or two other minor States. The present dynasty of Manchus have carried the *tabu* principle so far that it is hardly possible to ascertain the private Manchu name of an Emperor at all, and even their Chinese names have to be "dodged" or mutilated. Thus, for a quarter of a century,



I have tried in vain to find out the personal name of Nurhachi's son, Abakhaye, known to history as T'ai-tsung, or "Divus Magnus," the virtual founder of the ruling Imperial house, and the father of the first Manchu who actually reigned in Peking. I came across it by accident quite recently in a Russian work upon Manchuria, and doubtless it was obtained from artless Manchu sources. In the case of Manchu mandarins, the matter is further complicated by the fact that Manchus have no surnames (*i.e.* family names) at all in the strict Chinese sense; and that some of them endeavour to clothe their Manchu names in Chinese syllable dress; whilst others invent for use purely Chinese names, either meaning the same thing as their Manchu names kept in the background, or something else purely fanciful. In any case, the first Chinese syllable of a Manchu's name always counts amongst Chinese as his family name, thus: Ikotanga would be "Mr. I," and Junglu would be "Mr. Jung," the rest of the names *kotanga* and *lu* being held *tabu* by official sycophants only, and in a half-hearted sort of way—for the ablest Manchu Emperors have always disapproved of their own people aping Chinese ways.

The Emperor alone has the right to address persons of all ranks by their private names; but any of the Emperor's officers, speaking to his Majesty or other officers, will use the private name, no matter what be the rank of the officer spoken of. Thus the Emperor says "Li Hung-chang," and every one speaking of him to the Emperor does the same; indeed, the man in the street always says "Li Hung-chang" behind his back—just as the old British rustic (in *Punch* for instance) says "Sarlsbry," or "John Morley;"—but no one dare say "Hung-chang" to his face. This question of mandarin *tabu* is so complicated by local traditions and circumstances that it is impossible to lay down shortly any intelligible rule for popular European purposes which will not require reserves and qualifications; but the bottom fact is as stated.

Women in many parts of China are so childishly ignorant that they often do not know their own family names at all, at least, until hard pressed. Just as an English child when asked her name will say "Please, sir, Jemimarann," so a Chinese belle (if you can get at her, and make her speak at



all) will say : " My name is Jewel (or Gold, or Silver)." The most common personal names for women in China are very much like ours ; such as Rose, Daisy, Blossom, Nectar, Ruby, etc., etc. The etiquette about *tabu* is the same in principle as with males ; but, of course, as women are always regarded as appendages under the tutelage of father, husband, brother, or son, nothing connected with them or their rights has any first-hand basis of its own. Just as with us, " his Excellency's " wife often bears the complimentary title of " her Excellency," so a Chinese wife may borrow reflected glory from her husband ; but, unless the Emperor confers a special honour (usually posthumous) upon her, she is no more than an English bishop's wife is in relation to the status of her husband. In fact, women can hardly be considered to have substantive family names or rights at all, and in any case they " go out of the house " when they marry. A married woman is invariably officially described as, for instance, " Li T'ang Dame," which really means exactly the same as our " Mrs. Li, *née* T'ang." There is an ancient saying which is popular all over China even to this day :—" A woman has three *follows* ; she always follows (or is an appendage to) her father, husband, or son." However, in China as everywhere else, a woman of gumption always manages to assert herself ; and as another Chinese saying goes :—" That which ought not to be in principle nevertheless often is so in fact." There could not be a more striking instance of this than the career of the present Empress-Dowager, " Dame Nala," who, beginning her career as a handmaid or concubine, now handles Emperor, statesmen, and eunuchs, as though they were so many marionettes, for her own special purposes.

When a " foreigner " first appears in China, the first thing is to fit him out with a name, and in order to do this in a becoming way it is usual to transpose the family name. Thus Sir Thomas Wade and Sir Harry Parkes were dubbed Wei T'o-ma and Pa Hia-li, and by those appellations they will descend to Chinese posterity ; just as the Greeks and Romans, in a contrary direction, transformed Persian and Arabic syllables to suit their own inflected tongue. Most Europeans prefer that their family name should be a syllable belonging to the limited number of Chinese family names,

and that the personal name should have a Chinese ring. Both Sir Thomas Wade and Sir Harry Parkes were well served in this respect; the former is "Prestige of the Solid Agate," whilst the second is "Pa (a pure surname) of the Summer Principle." These flowery ideas are by no means so ridiculous in Chinese dress as they appear in English; the fact is that the most solemn things uttered in one tongue are apt to become utterly ludicrous in another. I remember an old Chinaman going into fits of laughter over what we consider the beautiful allegorical words, "Feed My lambs." He was endeavouring to understand a chapter in the New Testament, and he could not for the life of him understand what lambs and sheep had to do with the subject under discussion, especially as in that part of China no sheep can live at all.

There is a strong tendency in the waggish Chinaman to give comic names to Europeans, who thus occasionally masquerade unconsciously in very queer disguises. In doing this, the humorous Celestial is no more to be blamed than ourselves, for any one who has visited a Chinese town will have noticed such signs as "Cheap Jack" (*Chép tsék*, or "Wise Dew"), "Soapy Jim," "Barber Joe," etc. The British troops knew the *tsung-tuk*, or "Viceroy" of Canton, as John Tuck; and the celebrated Mongol hero, Prince Sêngkolinsin, was invariably styled "Sam Collinson." Even the genuine translations from Chinese at times have a comic effect, though no insolence may be intended. Thus the Bishop of Hong-kong is "Number One Joss-Man;" the Governor of Hong-kong, "Big Soldier-Head;" the Governor of Macao, "Big O Devil" (*Ó* being a literary form of *Ómun*, or "Macao;" and "devil," the local word for "European"). The last title, turned into "pidgin-English," becomes "Largee Porrughee Debilloo." The Governor's own gardener used these expressions to me when I asked him: "Who lives in this country house?" When combined with *tabu*, the jumble of ideas has a tendency to become irresistibly funny. There is a well-known Chinese plant called the *Kot*, from which a fine cloth is made. My old tutor always persisted in calling it the "solid-hearted arrowroot," explaining that, since Hongkong has fallen to the British, the word *Kot* had become *tabu*, as

having evil omen about it. He then proceeded to develop his thesis in the following way. He said the chief judicial authority (Supreme Court) was known as the *Tai Kot* (= Great "Court"), and that consequently the lower orders—mostly criminals, either "in being" or in potentiality—carefully avoided uttering the word, more especially because there was a foreign spirit of that name perpetually in the mouths of sailors and other Englishmen who wished to call down vengeance upon an enemy. The evil spirit in question bore the full literary name of *Kot-t'am*, and this dreadful expression was perpetually in use by irate Britishers. One of the first songs in the *Book of Odes* (he went on to say), begins: *Kot chi t'am hai* ("How the creeper spreads!"), and there was a general feeling that this ancient ode collected by Confucius had something to do with modern English curses, and required revision or paraphrase.

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## CHAPTER IV

### THE "PEKING GAZETTE" AND CHINESE POSTING

PREVIOUS to the introduction under European auspices of the Chinese newspapers now daily circulated from Hong-kong and Shanghai, and of more recent years also, to a lesser extent, from Tientsin and Hankow, there was hardly any dissemination of news throughout the Empire, except that conveyed by the *Peking Gazette*, or, as the Chinese call it, the *Metropolitan Reporter* (*King-pao*). For many years past English translations of the more important documents issued to and published by the *Peking Gazette* office have been furnished, either in full or in the form of a digest, according to their weight and interest, by the leading Shanghai newspaper; and, moreover, all the native Shanghai newspapers, and some of the others, publish daily, *in extenso*, the original Chinese versions: in the case of interesting

Imperial decrees, or of very important memorials from the Provinces, the chief organs of the Chinese press even obtain their information by telegraph from Peking. And thus it happens that the work of centralization, which has in every sense largely developed since the European envoys settled in Peking thirty-five years\* ago, has been considerably facilitated and brought home to the Chinese mind; both foreigners and natives receive rapid, precise, and regular information of what goes on in the capital, and the mystery which, until a generation ago, enveloped the springs of Manchu government shows a gradual tendency to disappear.

But it must not be imagined that all Imperial decrees are issued for publication. Anything of a confidential nature, whether in the form of a decree, rescript, or memorial, is "kept inside;" and there is no capital in the world where it is more difficult† to purchase secret documents than Peking. But these documents, when they concern the general weal, are none the less transmitted for record or report to most of the viceroys and provincial governors, from whose offices it is often not difficult to obtain, by purchase, copies of interesting documents. The local gentry, who like to be informed upon everything which concerns the interests of their caste in general and of their relatives holding office in particular, usually have a clerk or two in their pay, and these clerks are not slow to discover that some foreigners have similar and more liberally bestowed funds at hand for a like purpose. Besides this, Chinese officials themselves sometimes find it advantageous to obtain the publication in the native press of confidential documents; and, as this native press would soon be strangled to death without its European protection, they can easily disavow all responsibility by referring their censorious superiors to the foreign editor as the responsible person. Over and over again have the viceregal governments remonstrated with the consuls at Shanghai, and endeavoured to institute a sort of press inquisition; but at last they have come to perceive, on the one hand, that all such attempts are in vain, and, on the other, that "what is sauce for the goose is also sauce for the gander"—unpleasant publicity in one instance being compensated by desirable notoriety in another.

\* Written first in 1896.

† Except for Russians.

Thus it comes that the *Shên Pao*, or *Shanghai Reporter*, has now become an acceptable organ even at Court, besides circulating all over the Empire, and, to a less extent throughout Corea, Japan, Annam, Siam, and Burma; and it is as well-managed an organ as any European daily newspaper.

Yet the *Peking Gazette* has lost none of its importance; on the contrary, as the *Shên Pao* invariably prints the whole of it, the circulation of the older sheet has been enormously increased and popularized. The promotions and degradations, which, of course, present little of interest to foreigners, are scanned with avidity by the hungry provincial expectants; the latest news concerning the examinations is instantaneously telegraphed to Shanghai, and at once circulated for the information of the gaming fraternity, who make huge bets on the results, and, in the case of Canton, Hongkong, and Macao, get up popular lotteries involving millions sterling a year in prize money. Foreigners anxiously look for the publication in the *Gazette* of decrees favouring missionaries, which documents are of little use if left to the saving grace of local proclamations issued by the provincial authorities. Budding censors, who usually commence their successes in public life by protesting against somebody or something (it does not much matter what so long as it "goes down"), are delighted to see their names in print with the Imperial comments upon their effusions. For many years the words "telegraph" and "newspaper" were studiously ignored by the palace and by the provincial bureaux; it would have been almost as great an outrage to insert the word "telegram" in an Imperial decree as to speak of the Empire Music Hall or "bottled stout" in a King's Speech; but now telegraphic decrees and telegraphic reports are the order of the day, and a general in Turkestan only the other week mentioned in his memorial that he was sending the good news of his victories to be published in the *Shên Pao*. Changes in China come slowly, at least to those who are eager for progress; but in this, as in other matters, the difference between 1896 and 1866 is almost as great at root, though not so apparent above ground, as in the case of Japan. The vast carcase of China is unmistakably moving.



There is a special bureau or public department at Peking which is charged with the duty of copying and delivering in the form of a *Gazette* such documentary information as may be given to it for that purpose by the Emperor's order, or with the authority of the Privy Council. This information is grouped in three divisions, which may be thus enumerated: A, Court matters. B, Original decrees, rescripts, appointments, degradations, etc. C, Direct reports to the Emperor from the provincial governments. Under the first head appear the routine duties of the ministers in attendance, and the lists of presentations (if any) made by them. Two or three heads of departments are in attendance every eighth day until the whole twenty are exhausted, when the round begins again. The *Gazette* announces, for instance: "To-day was the attendance day of the Board of Office and the Hanlin Academy; \* there were no presentations." Besides the Boards of Revenue, Rites, Punishments, War, and Works, there are the Mongolian Superintendency, Household, Stud Office, Sacrificial Court, Clan Office, Board of Astronomy, Censorate, Banqueting Court, Court of Revision, Transmission Office, Education Office, Royal Mews, etc., etc. As in England, the Cabinet has no regular official organization, but it meets the Emperor every morning before dawn, and is now, in many respects, practically one and the same thing as the Board of Foreign Affairs, which is a creation of 1860, and is rather officious than official.† The Inner Council is much like our Privy Council; its official existence survives, but its functions have to most intents been superseded by the Cabinet Council. In addition to the above administrative departments, there are the Imperial Body Guard, Two Wings, and Eight Banners; these military departments also come in turn, but take ten days, instead of eight, to exhaust; consequently their rotation varies in respect of the civilians. After the announcement concerning attendances, the *Gazette* usually goes on to enumerate the applications for furlough, sick leave, permission to visit parents' tombs, and so on. Then come the verbal applications for special appointments, and the list of persons nominated on extraordinary temporary duty; for instance:

\* This last abolished since the "Boxer" ravages.

† Foreign Office reorganized since 1900 as the *Wai-wu Pu*.

"The Board of Revenue applies for a special auditor. His Majesty was pleased to nominate the Grand Secretary X." Or, "The War Office submits the propriety of appointing special examiners for the military status of competent armourer. His Majesty was pleased to name the Princes A. and B., the President C., and Messieurs D., E., and F. for this duty." Next follows a list of special audiences accorded; thus: "Special audiences granted to Li Hung-chang and to A., the ex-minister to Russia and Germany." Finally, the movements of the Emperor are notified, just as with us; thus: "His Majesty proposes to pass through the A. gate at 8 a.m. to-morrow, proceed to the B. audience chamber, and formally sanction the documents awaiting submission there. After this the Emperor will proceed by way of the C. court and the D. portal to the E. palace, and will there perform the appropriate rites for the day. His Majesty will present his respects to the Dowager-Empress on his way back, take a turn in the new steam-launch, quit the Lily Pond, and regain his private apartments by way of the F. garden and G. gate."

The range of ground covered by the Imperial decrees is of course very wide. Yet there is considerable sameness and similarity. I have read nearly all the Imperial decrees published during the past twenty (now 30) years, and I think I may safely say that out of a daily average of ten there is not one which is not worded in purely stereotyped fashion. The following are all routine decrees, varying only slightly according to special circumstances. In order to save space, and to avoid wearying the reader, I have much curtailed them.

1. The worthy Viceroy X.Y.Z. of Sz Ch'wan began his career as an ordinary bachelor, gradually working his way through the various administrative ranks, until he was entrusted with a province of his own. He had repeatedly solicited permission to retire, and both our Imperial Mother and ourself had conferred presents of pills and ginseng upon him at various times. We now hear, alas! that he is no more. X.Y.Z.'s penalties during life are hereby cancelled. One thousand pounds are bestowed for funeral expenses, and the local officials will pay every respect to the coffin as it passes through their jurisdictions. Prince A. will meet the procession outside Peking, and spread a Tibetan quilt upon

the remains. Let X.Y.Z.'s son B. become a junior president; his eldest grandson C. will be presented when he comes of age. In this way do we delight to honour an upright and loyal servant.

2. Let X. become viceroy of Sz Ch'wan.

3. Let Y. replace X. as governor of Ho Nan, proceeding direct to his post without seeking our further instructions. Until he arrives, let Z. the treasurer act as governor.

4. During the past ten years China and the foreigner have learnt to know each other better, yet there are still districts where Christian missionaries are viewed with hostility. The viceroys and governors of provinces should circulate copies of the treaties throughout all subordinate local offices, and see that prefects and magistrates carry out our Imperial desire that in future distant men be treated with every kindness.

5. The Governor X. reports a number of incompetents. The Prefect A. is an opium sot and too fond of actors; the Magistrate B. is a fellow of low and mercenary spirit. Let each be reduced one grade. The prefect C. is no fool, but he is getting old and feeble. Let him retire on his present rank. The Magistrate D. is simply an idiot. Let him take charge of the local education department instead.

6. The Governor A. reports the death of the Prefect of Canton. Let him select a successor from one of the available competent prefects in charge of any other town: let B. have the post thus vacated.

7. The remarks of the Censor X. upon the immoral tendencies of the age are not destitute of common sense. In striving after virtue, we only follow the lead of our sacred ancestors of never-to-be-forgotten memory; still, it is possible that failure of our own may exercise a deleterious psychological effect upon the minds of men at large. In future let all viceroys and governors watch their own conduct more closely, with a view to propitiating Heaven's favour.

8. The Resident in Tibet reports that the soul of the defunct Dalai Lama has been found in the body of A., an infant of the peasant B. family. It must be remembered that, in consequence of an offence by C., his late Majesty commanded twenty-five years ago that no souls should be

found for three generations in the district of D. It is presumed that the resident has this command in his mind's eye, and that the B. family is untainted with local disability. If this be so, the finding of the soul is approved.

9. A man stopped our sedan-chair yesterday with a petition. Let him be handed over to the Board of Punishments whilst inquiry is being made.

10. We yesterday received the benign commands of our Imperial Mother the Dowager to save our legs by riding in a litter instead of walking across the Lily Garden. Though we thought our body was fairly sound, still we must not forget our capacity as representative of all men under the sun. In future, at least when it is windy, let the litter be prepared.

11. Let A. be general at Foochow.

12. Eunuchs are at the best of times but the orts of men. Taking warning by the fate of the T'ang and Ming dynasties, we Manchus have never entrusted these menials with any important charges. The head eunuch A. appears to have used rude language to Li Hung-chang on the latter's declining to pay certain fees. Let him receive fifty blows with the stick, and let the iron tablet of rules suspended in the eunuch department be read out aloud to all these fellows once a month.

13. The Viceroy of Hu Kwang reports the descent to the earth from the clouds of a green lizard, and the consequent sudden stoppage of the floods in nine districts. We are infinitely touched by this gracious evidence of the gods' intervention. The Academy has been ordered to compose a suitable aphorism for engraving on a gorgeous tablet. The Viceroy will proceed in full uniform, followed by the whole official body, to hang this tablet in the Moth's Eyebrows Hall, in order to prove to the local deity that we are not indisposed to requite his services.

14. When the eclipse of the moon takes place to-morrow, let the proper authorities set up the usual howls, and save the moon in due legal form.

15. Let the X. murder case be handed to the Governor of Kwang Si, who will duly summon all parties and witnesses, examine the papers, and endeavour to get at the real truth. Let the appellant be sent back from Peking to be at once confronted with the appellee.

Specimens of Imperial decrees and rescripts might be multiplied indefinitely, but the above are sufficient for illustration. Nos. 2, 3, 6, 11 occur almost daily, Nos. 5 and 15 at least once a week. The others occur at rare intervals. It seldom happens that a decree appears couched in entirely new style, or treating of quite a fresh subject.

The area covered by reports from the Provinces is just as extensive as that occupied by decrees and rescripts. As a rule, confidential memorials are treated confidentially; but occasionally they are published in all their baldness, and viceroys and governors indulge in very unconventional language about each other before the Emperor. I remember in 1872-73 the Viceroy Liu K'un-yih (now\* at Nanking), when governor of Kiang Si, got into a mess with a local magnate then on a visit to Peking. The local magnate had written him private letters with a view to evading taxation on certain property. The Governor, in contradicting the magnate's slanderous statements, said: "His motives must have been corrupt, for long before that I had half a dozen private letters from him on the subject from Peking." The Emperor said: "How came you to let them run into the half-dozen? When he wrote the first time, you knew he had no right to do so. Why did you not report him? He says you were hoping to make better terms with him." The Governor rejoined: "It is the custom for viceroys and governors to correspond with local men at Peking, and, though it may be wrong, I am not one of those who pretend to goody-goody perfection. I simply wished to oblige him as a local man; but when he asked me to let him off scot-free, I gave him a piece of my mind. Anyhow, no one can say *I* am corrupt in money matters; and even if I was such an idiot as to try and make terms, I am at least not such a fool as to leave six letters on record, as he did." This Viceroy was totally fearless, and I subsequently had very close relations with him. He has innumerable faults which a censor might fairly denounce, but he is so honest and courageous that the Emperor cannot well forego his services.

Sometimes treasurers and judges, who as a rule only address the Throne on taking up and abandoning office, and

\* Died 1902; see chapter on Liu K'un-yih (*John Chinaman*, Murray, 1901).



on Imperial birthdays, may denounce their superiors, the viceroy or governor. This has happened several times at Canton: in one case they had the governor degraded for giving a feast during the time of Imperial mourning; and when I was there in 1875 the Manchu Viceroy, Yinghan,\* was summarily removed for encouraging gambling, on the application of the Chinese governor and Manchu general. Very few high officials can write their own memorials, or care to do so if they can. Yet they are held severely responsible for any slips in grammar, etiquette, or tact which their secretaries may make. Manchus always style themselves "slave," whilst Chinese use the word "subject;" for some unexplained reason certain Chinese military officers also use the word "slave." The highest provincial official is the Manchu general (where there is one); the next, the viceroy, whether Manchu or Chinese; or, if no viceroy, the governor. Memorials are in most cases returned in original, with the original rescript endorsed thereon; copies are made and kept at Peking, so that each side keeps the version it is responsible for, and tampering with documents is thus impossible.

Official despatches are conveyed through a service organized by the Board of War, and on arrival are placed in a locked box at the Transmission Office; a eunuch takes this box to the Emperor, who alone possesses the key. The Emperor sometimes endorses his minute at once, but usually he reserves his decision until the Cabinet officers appear, at 3 a.m. The Empress, when Regent, had a regular system of thumb-nail rescripts; not because she could not write, but because this saved trouble. The Inner Council then instantly copies the reports, whilst the "junior lords" of the Cabinet submit fair copies of the proposed decree. The Grand Secretariat is the depository for the copies of memorials and endorsements. Memorials are sent to Peking in flat wooden cases, fitted with spring locks, which can only be used once. A stock of them is periodically supplied by the Peking Board. The Emperor returns the original box, with the original document simply wrapped up, not locked, in it, and all old boxes and envelopes have to be ultimately returned

\* See chapter on Yinghan (*John Chinaman*, Murray, 1901).

respectfully to Peking, duly numbered. The couriers travel with the despatches strapped to the back, and are escorted by the official who sends the documents as far as the third inner gate; the grand central portal is then thrown open, and off rides the courier, to a salute of six guns. Ordinary letters go easily "by post," *i.e.* by comfortable stages of thirty miles a day. The order to "go 130 miles (or 150 miles) a day" is merely formal, and simply means that all speed, without incurring extra expense, is to be made. On the rare occasions when 200 miles a day are ordered, the same courier is expected to travel even six days without stopping more than a minute or two at a time; three such successful rides entitle him to the lowest official button. The most rapid journey ever ordered is 260 miles a day, and a man who accomplishes it for long distances is pensioned for life. (Chinese pensions, however, tend to exiguity.) When Canton was taken by our troops, the news reached Peking in six days, and the reconquest of Kashgaria in 1878 took very little more to report. On the great western high-road there are now 2680 post-horses and 1340 post-boys. Previous to the Yakub Beg rebellion there were nearly three times these numbers, but the Kan Suh province has for long been somewhat disorganized.

To return to our reports. Each important document would be on the average quite as long as the whole of this article, so that it will readily be seen we cannot give full examples. As with the decrees, so with the reports—many occur daily; others weekly, monthly, quarterly, or yearly. Daily ones—not daily from each province, but appearing almost every day—are such as propose promotions and transfers; report the rehearing of appeal cases; announce the despatch of funds to Peking; apply for the Imperial approval in cases of marked filial piety, and so on. But their nature can be best judged by the light of the decrees and rescripts, of which instances have been given above.

P.S. (*to original article*).—Since writing the above, I have received a *Gazette* containing a very curious memorial from Dalai Lama of Tibet, an exalted ecclesiastical functionary analogous to the Pope of Rome, except that the Manchu

Emperors, whilst recognizing his spiritual claims, insist upon his keeping to his proper temporal place :—

“Petty priest that I am, in obedience to the precedents followed by my predecessors, I descend from my mountain seat, and, having selected a propitious day, proceed to the Great Temple to hold a full choral service on all occasions upon which the territories subject to Tibetan rule are found free from temporal afflictions, with a view to somewhat relieving my loyal cares by offering devout prayers for the peace and long life of His Majesty the Emperor, and the tranquillity of the world in general. Thanks to the felicitous *ægis* of our Sacred Master, Tibetan territory is now free from any plague of sickness, and all remains at peace. Accordingly, my private vicar-general and preceptor has selected the 23rd of February, 1896, as an auspicious day upon which I, petty priest that I am, am to proceed in person, at the head of the whole ecclesiastical bodies of the three chief Lhasa temples, to the Great Metropolitan Temple, there to hold solemn service, and to offer up special prayers for our Sacred Master’s long life and prosperity, and for the welfare of his people.”

The above was received through K’weihwan, Manchu Resident in Tibet. An Imperial rescript was received as follows: “Let the department concerned take due note.” By the Emperor.

In view of the revolution now taking place in Tibet, the above official definition of the relations between the Buddhist Pope and the Emperor of China is interesting.

## BOOK VII

### CELESTIAL PECULIARITIES

#### CHAPTER I

##### DIET AND MEDICINE IN CHINA

THE commonly received opinion that the Chinese as a nation habitually feed on rats and mice is quite erroneous. But in the city of Canton "spatch-cock" rats—that is, rats split open and dried—are commonly sold in the streets for the purposes of eating. An old Cantonese teacher\* of mine never failed to cook and eat a rat whenever he was fortunate enough to catch one ; he said the flesh was "warming." A Cantonese peasant woman of my acquaintance, who suffered much from rheumatism and chills, told me that she found boiled rats always did her good. Other native women told me that it made the hair grow more rapidly. I do not know if mice are eaten too ; but in Chinese there is no word distinguishing rats from mice, both, in fact, being species of the genus *Mus*. Spatch-cock rats are usually sold in the streets of Canton strung on a stick, like the cabobs of Turkey and Egypt. I have never heard of rat-eating in any other province.

In the same way, cats and dogs are by no means usual food, though in most parts of China the poor are glad of any chance meat which may be thrown in their way. In Canton, however, both kittens and puppies are hawked about as a delicacy ; and I myself once bought a nice little dog in a cage for sixpence. He used to follow my official chair in and out of the city every day. The roof of his mouth and his tongue were as dark as a common indiarubber eraser. There is one

\* See chapter on "Old Ow" (*John Chinaman*, Murray, 1901).

shop in Canton where cats' flesh is the sole article sold. Like rats' flesh, it is said to be warmth-producing.

In Peking we used, when living out of town, ourselves to regularly eat camel, donkey, and goat, nothing else being obtainable. Our only concern was to secure flesh which had been properly slaughtered. But I have often seen the neighbours gather round a camel or donkey which had fallen dead in the roads, and cut it up for food. Once, at Chemulpho, whilst walking out with M. Cogordan, the French Minister to Corea, I saw some Coreans take a frozen dead dog out of some rubbish and deliberately prepare to cook it. On another occasion I was travelling alone in the wilds of Hu Pêh, when I came across a whole village engaged in the work of scraping a huge pig. I asked for explanation why they did not disembowel it first, and why it was covered with livid spots. The villagers said : " We are going to eat the inside too ; and the livid spots are there because the pig died of plague."

There is, I believe, only one place known to Europeans in China where human milk is hawked about for sale ; that is Amoy, and old men are the purchasers. Until the advent of Europeans, cows' milk was very little drunk anywhere in China, except in the north, where Tartar pastoral habits have influenced the national taste. In the same way, in Annam and Burma, I found that milk had no place in the national diet. But of late years the Chinese have begun to fancy the sweetened tinned milks of Europe. Cheese is held in abomination by the Chinese, who call it " milk cake," and consider it in the light of " rotten milk." The Chinese histories have very accurate descriptions of the *kumiss* and other milk foods of the Turks and Tartars, but they themselves never seem to have adopted them. A decoction known as *nai-ch'a*, or " milk-tea," is drunk at the Manchu court, and is served out on State occasions ; but it is merely a survival—probably of Mongol rule.

Turtles' sinews are considered good for pains in the joints. In Nanking there is a local custom of chewing horses' sinews, but I do not know for what purpose. Elephants are considered good eating in many countries, but it appears to be reserved to the Chinese Emperor to devour the monster's skin and bones. In 1887 an official statement appeared in



the *Peking Gazette* to the effect that one of the palace elephants had died, and that (after a certain amount of correspondence between the different departments of State) it had been decided to keep the skin and bones "for his Majesty's consumption when unwell." The same year the Emperor's father was cured of some malady with donkey's skin. From ancient times rhinoceros' horns, ground to powder, have been considered of great therapeutic value. During an epidemic of cholera in the eleventh century, the Emperor gave two whole rhinoceros' horns to the people of the metropolis. Both elephants' and rhinoceros' horns used to be sent as tribute from the States of the Indo-Chinese peninsula. Young and tender deer horns fetch a high price in the Chinese pharmacopœa. There are the Manchurian, Tibetan, and Yün Nan varieties.

Birds' nests and sea-slugs are invariably present amongst the grand dishes at first-class Chinese feasts. I have often eaten birds' nests. In their unprepared form they look like rough horn cups, or saucers of gelatine, interspersed with bits of straw. The swallow throws up in this form the half-digested masses of fish and seaweed from its stomach, in order to form an adhesive cement wherewith to hold the twigs together. When I was at Faifo, on the coast of Annam, I found that there was a considerable export thence. The nests are obtained from the isolated rocks or islets hard by ; these rocks are hollow in the centre, and only accessible with risk and difficulty. Many other islands in the south seas export nests to China ; even in Fiji I heard there was an incipient trade. The *kwan-yen*, or "official swallows' [nests]," are very expensive, and even those of the worst quality are far beyond the reach of ordinary individuals. They taste very like isinglass. In ordering a feast from a contractor, it is always stipulated "with or without swallows." Sea-slugs, or *bicho do mar*, are in appearance like bits of turtle fat, corrugated as tripe. They are tough and almost tasteless, something between the French *escargots* and cooked seaweed to the palate. Both the above dishes are patronized by the Chinese because of their supposed recuperative powers. The learned Abbé Huc, who is usually right in his statements, however highly coloured they may be from an artistic point

of view, ridicules the idea that sharks' fins and castor oil enter into the ordinary Chinese *cuisine*. But sharks' fins are nearly always given with a big dinner, and I have myself been told frequently that castor oil, the plant producing which grows freely all over China, is sometimes used in cookery ; in fact, I have tasted it myself ; but in moderation it is not much worse than the sesame oils, tea oils, and ground-nut oils more commonly used.\*

Wild Manchurian ginseng (*Panax*) is almost worth its weight in gold. Even the semi-wild quality from Corea is worth its weight in silver. A large quantity of cultivated ginseng has of late years been imported from San Francisco. Though usually described as a medicine, it is rather a food tonic, possessing, in the Chinese opinion, marvellous "repairing" qualities. When a distinguished statesman is ill, the Emperor, as a special honour, occasionally bestows an ounce or two of ginseng upon him. European physicians have decided that the virtues of ginseng are largely imaginary. When I was in Corea, I suffered agonies from sciatica, and conceived the idea that ginseng might "repair " my nerves. I consulted an American official there, who told me that he had once tried it, but that it made him "perspire blood." I made myself some ginseng tea, besides chewing bits of the root very cautiously. The only effect was to make me feel very hilarious and full of nervous force ; but it did not cure the sciatica, and I was afraid of increasing the dose in view of what the United States official had said.

The Chinese are, or were until the advent of missionary doctors a few decades ago, almost totally ignorant of chemistry, anatomy, and physiology. Their ideas of the construction of the human frame, as taught by the Imperial College, are beneath contempt. Though in ancient times the Chinese had grasped the idea of blood-circulation, the different functions of veins and arteries have never been understood ; and air, like blood, is supposed to permeate the body through imaginary tubes. Their physicians confine their diagnosis almost entirely to feeling the pulse, which is supposed to show seventy-two separate indications. Though there certainly is some empirical skill in feeling the pulse, it need hardly be said that their

\* When boiled or fried it is not a purgative, I have since been assured.

pretensions to judge thereby the state of each organ are based on chicanery. Their *Materia Medica*, however, is by no means so contemptible as their surgery, and the Abbé Huc pays a very just tribute to their skill in prescribing simples. When I was at Canton (living alone inside the city away from all Europeans), I made the acquaintance of a very effective sudorific which had to be taken in the form of a *tisane*, or tea. For many years after that I used to carry a packet of "bricks" about with me, and a single brick never failed to cure, in one dose, slight attacks of low fever. For a whole decade the European community of Canton, including all the ladies without exception, were attended by a Chinese physician who had been educated in Scotland, but who still wore native clothes and plaited queue. Of course Dr. Wong \* (for that was his name) was regarded in the light of a European, and always comported himself as such ; but in his heart of hearts he was still a Chinaman, and used to confide to me many of his inner beliefs, one of which was that European doctors did not understand fevers, and more especially the chills, low fevers, and so-called typhoid fevers of Canton. In the most common of them the whites of the nails turn blackish, and the tongue gets a black fur too. Whenever I noticed, after a chill, my nails growing black, I used to totally ignore foreign physicians, and doctor myself with *ng-shi-ch'a*, or "noon-tide tea ;" that is to say, the *tisane* already mentioned, after the method prescribed by Chinese cronos. Notwithstanding all this, the Chinese are very glad to get quinine, especially when there is no charge for it. They suffer a great deal from ague, and either neglect it or are unable to cure it. Europeans are almost invariably attacked by these Canton fevers through sleeping in the draught after indulgence of some sort, and they are almost always certified as dying of typhus or typhoid fever.

The Abbé Huc was satisfied that many Chinese doctors were able to cure the worst cases of hydrophobia, and I myself have seen in widely different provinces frequent advertisements by philanthropists offering a cure gratis, which certainly looks as though the physician at least honestly believed in his own remedy. The first sign of rabies, whether in a

\* See chapter on Dr. Wong in *John Chinaman*.

dog or a man, is a strong repulsion to being fanned, and to hearing the noise of a gong. If these symptoms appear, two doses of the following *tisane*, taken hot, must be administered within seven days of the bite which produced rabies :  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. ginseng ;  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. of *Peucedanum decursivum* ;  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. *Angelica* root ;  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. of another plant allied to the last two ;  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. *Bupleuri octoradiati* ;  $\frac{1}{5}$  oz. of either *Citrus fusca* or *decumana* skin, broiled ;  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. *Platycodon grandifolium* ;  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. *Pachyma pinetorium* ;  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. liquorice root ;  $\frac{1}{5}$  oz. of the *radix tuberosa Levistici* ;  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. raw ginger ; 1 oz. of *radix Hedysari* ; and a handful of "red bamboo"—one of the common bamboos of China. Seven days later some raw beans should be chewed. If they taste like cooked beans, and can be swallowed easily, the *tisane* must again be taken three times, and the bean test renewed until a cure is effected. But if there is nausea in attempting to swallow the raw beans, the cure is already complete, or will be complete. In the case of dogs, the same treatment is followed, with the addition that an ounce of *radix Daphnidi* *Myrrhæ* must be mixed with their rice. Pregnant women need not be afraid to swallow the *tisane*. If lockjaw has already set in, the front teeth of the patient must be knocked out, and the *tisane* poured in somehow. The advertiser in one case says he himself found out the remedy accidentally through seeing a man, taken by mistake for a quack, tied to a patient whom he had offered to cure for six taels. The villagers had adopted this practical method of discovering alike the secret of the cure and the fact of the doctor's good faith. The victim was cured, and the doctor duly paid by the village.

Some Chinese doctors use cantharides for hydrophobia, but this remedy is now disapproved as being too painful. They prescribe in preference *Geranium nepalense*, red bamboo root, and ginseng. Thus it will be seen that red bamboo and ginseng are declared on all sides to be essential to a cure.

The following is a Chinese prescription for cholera : Stir up with a little rice spirit (usually called "wine"),  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. of the best *Fusticia* ;  $\frac{1}{6}$  oz. of a certain *Convolvulus* ;  $\frac{1}{6}$  oz. of sweet *Atractylodes* ;  $\frac{1}{6}$  oz. of ginger ; and  $\frac{1}{6}$  oz. of dried liquorice. If the hands and feet show great coldness, add  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. of *Aconitum variegatum*. If the hands and feet are shrivelled,



add  $\frac{1}{3}$  oz. of *Carica papaya*, taking the draught boiled in clear water.

It is unnecessary to describe in detail the alleged Chinese cure for the Yün Nan plague, which has during the past few years ravaged parts of the Canton province, for the Chinese doctors have proved themselves totally unable to cope with it. The same may be said of all foreign remedies, until Dr. Yersin's discovery of the bacillus, together with his new inoculating system, proved that there really were adequate means of coping with it.

The bite of the cobra is said to be counteracted by sucking up and swallowing water through a stale tobacco-pipe. I myself once saw a soldier rubbing his toe with tobacco juice after having been bitten by a snake. At the same time, the Chinese do not neglect the more practical remedy of sucking the wound and binding the limb tight directly above it. Snakes are said to dread orpiment, and this substance, mixed with rice spirit, is freely sprinkled about native houses. But, as a rule, the Chinese are not afraid of snakes, and rarely kill them unless suddenly startled or annoyed by them. I have known families who allowed snakes fixed quarters in the house, and the snake seemed to understand that he was safe from attack so long as he kept reasonably out of the way. One of the few Buddhist ideas that have taken real root in China is the horror of taking animal life unnecessarily. Snakes are declared to sedulously avoid places where the balsam grows. They also object to sulphurous smells. An unpleasant snake incident once happened to me. I was resting for lunch one wet day with a French friend in a Peking temple, and we were looking up at the paper ceiling, and remarking what a number of snakes seemed to be crawling above. Suddenly there was a hissing sound, and we were instantaneously enveloped in dust and darkness. Loosened by the rain, the whole paper ceiling fell at once, covering us, our tables, chairs, etc. If there were any snakes, they made off in the scrimmage. In and around Peking a day rarely passes during the summer without a snake being seen somewhere. They shed their skins then, and these are used for eye medicines. Wasp stings are cured by rubbing the place with raw taro—that is, after the sting has been



extracted, raw taro will allay pain and prevent inflammation. I myself was severely stung by a scorpion at Peking, where these insects swarm, but I preferred an instant application of ammonia to speculating with native nostrums. My servants were frequently stung by centipedes, but they usually escaped lightly by letting the centipede alone. If you have the nerve to keep still while he travels round your neck or up your trousers, he will not touch you; if your nerve fails, your only plan is to squash him against your skin before he has time to hurt. I once squashed what I thought was one in my boot that way; but I could not help it, as the boot was already on. I imagined all sorts of pains in my great toe, but as soon as the wriggling ceased I found it was only a small frog. At Canton I once put my hand to my neck to brush off some tickling substance, when suddenly I felt a clammy yielding object like a broken pigeon's egg. It turned out to be a huge *tarantula*, said to be of the harmless kind. I had killed him. Some *tarantulæ* are dreadfully poisonous, but I think they come from near Tartary.

Small-pox—at least, when I was at Peking nearly thirty years ago—was almost universal. Fifty per cent. of men and women were more or less marked, and 99 per cent. had had it. So much was this the case, that no one would marry a person who had not had the small-pox. It was called “joy,” or “flowers.” It was quite a polite question to ask, “Has your son seen joy yet?” The Mongols are free from small-pox in their own country, but they have a great horror of catching it in Peking, and still more of taking it home. I suppose the invariable presence of cattle protects them in Mongolia. Of late years inoculation and vaccination have made great strides, and no doubt Peking is less affected than before. But in no part of China is any fuss made about small-pox, nor are any protective or sanitary measures taken. Children recovering from the small-pox are freely carried about the streets. I noticed comparatively little small-pox in the central and southern provinces. The Chinese do not seem to have any remedy for small-pox beyond dieting and avoiding draughts. Gratuitous vaccination is now common all over China.

Wênchow is the city in China most celebrated for its eye

medicines. I have tried them and found them highly cooling in cases of inflamed eyelids. The custom is to mix them with honey and milk, and to insert a little into the corners of the eye with a sort of round-headed pin. As already mentioned, snakes' skins are used in the preparation of eye medicines. Chinese varnish often seriously affects the eyes. An American colleague at Chinkiang, who was having his house renovated, not only got inflamed eyes, but was covered with a red eruption for several weeks. The natives call the malady "varnish eating," and say that it attacks the system through the nostrils.\* It is recorded in Tyrwhitt's "Canterbury Tales" that the gall of the hyæna used to be employed in Europe for diseases of the eye.

The lily bulb is used for diseases of the lungs. Probably the idea was derived from the Tartars, who still feed on it largely. The ancient Turks of Siberia are also stated to have used it as a food. For heart disease petrified crabs are considered good. I took the trouble to hunt them up in the island of Hainan. They look just like stone, and are ground into a powder for use. In connection with crabs, I may mention that at Chungking, 1600 miles inland, the most aristocratic present you can give is a couple of live sea-crabs. They are worth their weight in silver there. A mandarin once gave me two, each not much bigger than a large *tarantula*; but I at once passed them on, so as to get credit for "high tone" before the crabs should die.

The Chinese suffer much from itch and other skin diseases; not that they have not excellent remedies—*e.g.* the so-called "Goa powder;" but they do not seem to mind the itch. When I was at Canton, the Hoppo suffered severely from it, and the consul took him in hand. We were, however, chiefly anxious for our own sakes. Oyster-shell dust is a good remedy for some itchy irritations; also the fruit of the *Melia azedarach* boiled into a soup. Many Europeans get what is called "washerman's itch," and when at Wênchow I had it for a whole year. Oyster-shell dust is said to be good also for mumps and for certain swellings allied to rickets. Though the Chinese burn the *Artemisia contra*, as the Venetians do the *sanzare*, to keep off mosquitoes, they do not seem to

\* The Chinese used to inoculate through the nostrils against small-pox.

understand that its proximate principle, *santonine*, is a remedy for tapeworm. The Chinese oil of peppermint is a well-known alleviative in cases of headache or depression. "Toads' eyebrows" are effectual to provoke sneezing, and thus clear the head; the toad of Sz Ch'wan is said to capture its food, the wax insects, by "spitting at them through its eyebrows."

Swallowing opium is now the favourite way of committing suicide. A preparation of *Bombyx malabaricum* is considered a good antidote. There are many others. In any case the white of egg prevents action on the bowels. Jumping head foremost down a well was in fashion before.\* The Chinese now profess to be able to dispel the effects of opium swallowed by injections at the wrist. The various forms of arsenic are also much affected by suicides, but arsenic is chiefly used in murder. High-placed Chinese often carry secret poisons about them, which, after being swallowed, do not act until a cup of tea or water is drunk. The Sultan of the Panthays (whose son is still a British pensioner at Rangoon) cheated his captor, the Viceroy Ts'ên Yüh-ying (the supposed instigator of Margary's murder) in this way. The poison used by the savage Miao tribes similarly requires water to bring it out. The victim is attacked by intense thirst, and cannot resist drinking the necessarily fatal quantity. For poisoning fish the *Datura alba* and *Melia azedarach* are both used. The most aristocratic way of poisoning one's self is to swallow gold. Some Chinese say that gold, like quicksilver, is so heavy that a lump of it perforates the bowel. Others say that the gold leaf swells as soon as it reaches the stomach and bowels.

Tigers' bones are very valuable, and the way the Chinaman distinguishes the true from the false is by giving them to a dog to sniff. If the bones are genuine, back go the dog's ears, down goes his tail, and off he speeds like the wind; if the bones are not genuine, the dog simply gnaws them.

It is well known that the Chinese object to drink cold water; they say it injures the bowels. Probably, although they do not know it, the true reason is that boiled water often disposes of harmful organic matter. In North China

\* After the "Boxer" troubles in 1900, numbers of aristocratic families took headers into wells.

especially, hot water is quite an ordinary roadside drink. In travelling over the Mongol plains, I found snow-water very unpalatable for making coffee; but the Chinese preserve it for use as a cooling medicine; the mud taken from the bottom of a well is used by them for the same purpose. A decoction of green-bean flour is said to be very cooling in summer, and barrels of it are often provided for the public by philanthropists. Six parts of chalk to one of liquorice also make a grateful summer drink when mixed with a proper proportion of water. "Tea cake" is sold to travellers for chewing on the road, and is said to quench the thirst almost as well as the decoction. The priests of Peking are in the habit of chewing a mysterious drug called *hwang-chi* ("yellow chicken"), which not only stays hunger, but is a powerful tonic.

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## CHAPTER II

### LEPERS IN CHINA

THE first place in China where I saw lepers in any great number was Canton. In that city they seem to have a great monopoly of the retail rope and cord trade, and they may be seen any day at the corners of the narrow streets squatting on the ground with their humble stock-in-trade before them; nor does there appear to be any particular dread of personal contact with them. Whether it is that a municipal rule keeps them away, or whether it is that the more repulsive lepers do not care to come into town, it is at any rate unusual to see very advanced cases in the public streets of the city. In order to witness these, one must go to the leper village, situated outside the East Gate, in the direction of the execution ground, or rather of the ghastly field into which the dead bodies of executed criminals are thrown, a mile or two below the city walls. There they may be seen in all stages of decay, from a faint livid spot in the lobe of the ear, to a sort

of scrofulous chalky rottenness covering the greater part of the body, and slowly eating the hands and feet away. In all parts of China where leprosy is common, the people say the same thing, namely, that there is no danger of contagion so long as a healthy person does not actually sleep with a leper. Hence it comes about that, however careless the Chinese may be in their daily intercourse with this unfortunate class, they are always exceedingly particular to turn them out of town before sunset. Tending cows seems to be the occupation of the village lepers; and I remember that at one time this discovery created quite a panic amongst the European ladies of Canton. Perhaps for this reason most Europeans there now milk their own cows. The leper village outside of Canton is a walled enclosure, containing several streets and a considerable number of well-built houses, with a temple and other public buildings for the use of the inmates. These are of all classes; for, no matter how rich a man may be, he is unable to keep a leprous member of his family in his own house so soon as the fact becomes known to the neighbours. Once in the leper village, there is nothing to prevent one diseased person from marrying with another and begetting children; nor, if a healthy wife chooses to sacrifice herself to a leprous husband, does the law stand in her way. Leprosy, however, is one of the few cases which justify the breaking off of a marriage, even if it be the woman who seeks to cancel her contract with a leprous man.

It is not only the mere bodily contact whilst in occupation of the same sleeping accommodation which transmits the disease; it appears sufficient if the breath of a leper, or the effluvium thrown off by a leper when in a comatose state, is breathed at close quarters by a healthy person whose body is also in a comatose or receptive condition. Thus one sister may get the disease from another, though of course conditions of receptivity are more varied and numerous in the case of man and wife. Naturally the children of lepers are also lepers; but occasionally a generation is skipped, and a healthy son may transmit his father's leprosy to his own progeny. However, the Chinese are so little observant in scientific medicine and surgery that we cannot be quite sure upon this point.



The only recognized way of finding out whether a subject is affected by leprosy or not is to expose the suspected features and members to the light over a crucible of nitre (*k'ing siao lu*), when the traces are shadowed out unmistakably. A native Shanghai newspaper of May last contains the following item:—"Purchasers of female slaves in the region of Canton always subject the proposed purchase to the ordeal of the crucible. But it so happened that last year a friend of ours bought a girl of twelve or thirteen, who, despite the fact that she had been exposed to the nitre stove, very shortly afterwards betrayed a sort of cloudy red spot on her face. A leper doctor at once identified it as leprosy; but when he had her exposed a second time, to every one's surprise she seemed as sound as an ordinary person. No statements of an incriminating nature could be extracted from her, and she roundly swore she was no leper. Recourse was then had to threats, and in order to avoid being pitched into the river, she confessed at last that she really was a leper, and that the seller had told her that *if she kept a silver coin in her mouth during the crucible ordeal, no traces would come out*; he warned her to keep the secret, or else she would certainly be put in the leper village" (called in Chinese the *Fêng-yüan*).

When I was in Canton twenty years ago, there were one or two alleged European or American cases, but it did not appear to me that they were clearly authenticated; and in any event the foreign population of Canton is so fleeting and changeable that the hospital could not possibly have time to form an adequate opinion upon a permanently resident case. There is an expression, "selling leprosy," well known amongst women at Canton, and possibly some sailor or temporary visitor may have fallen a victim in this way.

In Hoihow, a town in the island of Hainan to the south of Canton, I became "quite intimate" with the lepers. There, as at Canton, they are confined, for sleeping purposes, to a village just outside the walls of the town, and they are authorized by old custom, or by municipal rule, to proceed twice a month to the island metropolis of Kiungchow in order to beg in the public streets. I used to meet them coming back on the first and fifteenth of each month, their

wallets filled with broken food. It is a favourite plan of theirs to force alms from a stranger by feigning to catch hold of the hand. Of course most people draw back in horror, and many are only too glad to throw a few coppers in order to exchange the lepers' company for their room. It always seemed to me that they emitted a sort of "hot smell;" not a rank or loathsome or acute odour, but a kind of feverish musty smell, as though some sub-metallic fume were being exuded into the air around them. Halfway between Kiungchow and Hoihow there stood a number of tiny mat-huts, scarcely larger than dog-kennels, at intervals of a few yards from each other, on both sides of the road. These huts were inhabited by half-naked leper women, and most of them had lost either arms, toes, or both sets of digits. When I paid my formal visits to the mandarins in my sedan chair, I always directed the official servants who ran after me to put about five hundred cash into the palankeen, and with these cash I used to amuse myself and gratify the women as I ran the leper gauntlet. I well remember one woman who was almost like a skeleton covered with skin. She had no fingers and no upper lip; besides that, her elbows, shoulders, and facial protuberances were all covered with a sort of mouldy fluff. I don't know whether these road cases were so bad that even the leper villages would not take them in, but there they always were during the day, and I suppose they remained there at night too. In the town of Hoihow there was a curious little beggar boy, very bright and intelligent, who used to assist at the local rope-walk, and run about playing with other boys in the streets. He was covered all over by a sort of half-invisible yellow scale, like a fish, and the people used to class him as a "doubtful leper." Apparently he slept on the doorsteps, and successfully asserted his doubtfulness to the extent of not having to go to the village at night. I never actually touched him, though I often gave him a copper, and allowed him to walk and talk with me. I believe he used to sleep under my porch occasionally too; probably he is still there.

In the interior provinces of Hu Pêh and Kiang Si I twice came across lepers. One of them offered me some fine pears for sale. I cannot say if these inland specimens were

indigenous or imported lepers. I also saw a few during my year's stay at the riverine port of Hankow. The remarkable thing is that lepers do not suffer any pain. At first the only sign that leprosy is coming on is a feeling of numbness about the fingers, ears, or nose; the eyebrows get scabby-looking; and the hair begins to thin away. Then the face gets to assume a bright or glazed appearance here and there, as though the parts had just recently healed of a burn or scald; the eyes look hot, inflamed, and rat-like, like those of a white rabbit or common ferret. Progress downwards from this stage is very gradual, but any accidental lesion encourages the formation of deep and fetid ulcers. When I lived at Kewkiang, Dr. Shearer used to take lepers in hand, and he told me his experiences. I believe careful treatment with alteratives, coupled with good feeding, may easily arrest the course of the disease; but it will not eradicate it, and the subjects are usually of too humble a walk in life to make it worth any one's while to feed them up, unless it be for scientific purposes, or out of motives of curiosity. No perspiration ever takes place through the glazed portions, and paralysis in the face is a very usual accompaniment. So far as I have been able to ascertain, leprosy in China is confined, firstly, to places near a tidal river; and, secondly, to places of a marshy and undrained character. In the interior of China no such care is taken to segregate the lepers as is insisted on in Canton and Hoihow; but probably this is on account of the comparative infrequency of the disease. Against small-pox, plague, cholera, and other analogous scourges the Chinese usually take no sanitary precautions whatever; it is only leprosy which imbues them with horror, although it is quite painless, and never affects the general health, except that, in the case of very young people, it retards puberty. The Hoihow people say that leprosy may be specifically acquired by eating the flesh of a dead chicken over which a centipede has run. But there is no end to their medical yarns.

When I was in Burma I saw a few cases of leprosy near Rangoon; but the weather was too hot for me to personally explore in leprous localities. A native Burmese doctor once assured me that he possessed the secret of an absolutely

certain cure for leprosy, and offered to cure in my presence any leper I might bring to him. He said he had learned the secret from an old bonze in a *kyaung*, or temple such as the poor use in Burma for all the purposes of an inn. The doctor had done the priest some good turn, and the priest, who was on the verge of death, wished to requite the favour. The cure is as follows: As in the case of the Chinese crucible test, nitre plays an important part, and it is worth while investigating the question why nitre should possess at once the alleged property of disclosing and curing leprosy. It is also remarkable that, as with the Chinese, arsenic is used as an alterative. The Burmese bonze's prescription specified equal parts of saltpetre, arsenic, camphor, vitriol, sulphur, orpiment, common solder, and white arsenic, powdered and heated over a charcoal fire. A piece of paper is laid over the pan to prevent the mixture from flaring up by contact with too much air. The thick vapour which arises is allowed to collect in an alembic in the form of a crust. One sixty-fourth of a rupee in weight of this crusty essence is administered, mixed with pure honey, to the patient, who must have previously devoured at least a pound of honey by way of preparing his stomach. Notwithstanding all this honey, the leper is at once seized with a most violent fit of nausea and vomiting, and during the whole of the next day the leprous spots will be so hot that their glow may be felt at a distance of two feet. (This remarkable glow accords with my own experience of a hot feverish smell.) On the fourth day scabs are peeled off all the affected parts, and the process is repeated, if necessary, until all these leprous spots cease to be feverish. In some cases four or five repetitions are necessary, and occasionally the severe vomiting carries off the patient. Of course there is no cure for disfigurements, nor can parts which have once dropped off be made to grow on again; but the disease is eradicated from all parts where it lurks in an active state.

The above cure, or alleged cure, for leprosy was brought by the Burmese doctor before a European practitioner in Mandalay or Rangoon, and this practitioner advised the man to lay his secret before the Indian Government. But nothing was done. As I held an official position under the Indian Government at that time, I informally undertook to make the

suggestion. But there is some knack or secret in the mixing or heating of the drugs above enumerated, and this secret the Burmese doctor would not disclose without a preliminary reward. Thus the thing fell through again. I promised not to disclose the secret even so far as it is explained above; but the man died a couple of years ago, and I therefore consider myself absolved.

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### CHAPTER III

#### CHINESE GAMES AND SPORTS

THE Chinese are essentially a sedentary people, and little given to outdoor sports. Cricket, hockey, golf, football, baseball, tennis—all these are totally unknown to them, nor have they anything corresponding thereto. Horse-racing, archery, weight-lifting, putting the stone, and fencing are rather military exercises than sports; and even then it is more the ruling caste of Tartars than the Chinese proper who indulge in such pastimes. However, self-contained and sedate though the yellow man may be, he is not totally destitute of a desire for amusements, whether indoor or outdoor; and accordingly in this paper I propose to give some account of them, beginning first with those concerning the animal kingdom.

Quail-fights are in vogue both in the north and south of China, and it is by no means uncommon in Peking to see a man walking about in the country lanes with his favourite bird in a cage. He takes it out, feeds it, and plays with it just as the Spaniards do with their fighting cocks, “nourishing” its hate and ferocity, wherever opportunity may occur, by confronting it with a rival of its own kind. In Canton quail-fights are usually held in gambling booths or mat sheds, (called *líp* or *liak*, according to dialect), and betting goes on very freely.



Cricket-fights are also common, alike in Peking, in the Great River valley, and in the south. In Peking the crickets are invariably kept in a sort of covered jar made of a porous earthenware, which we Europeans used to find most excellently adapted for keeping tobacco in. When once the insects close, they rarely separate until one or the other is left dead on the field.

Cock-fighting is a very ancient sport, but at present it seems to have gone somewhat out of vogue. At Shanghai the Manila seamen, of whom there are always great numbers in port, invariably amuse themselves on a Sunday with an afternoon of cock-fighting. It is either ignored or connived at by the foreign municipality. The arrangements, though on a humbler scale, differ in no way from those of the regular arenas in Madrid, Mexico, or Havana. The spurs are small razors of the most deadly description, and the movements of the birds are so rapid that one of the two often falls dead from a blow clean through its head without the inexperienced spectator being able to see more than a flutter of feathers and an instantaneous rush on both sides. Nearly 1200 years ago the Emperor who is popularly supposed to have "invented" small feet for women also distinguished himself, like our James I., by his cock-fighting propensities. He used to give public entertainments in the spring of each year at the ancestor-worshipping festival; and, in order to keep an adequate supply of game-cocks, he established a sort of mews in the neighbourhood of his own palace. Here 500 boys were steadily employed in training and feeding 1000 cocks. But even in Confucius's time, 1200 years before this again, there is mention of metal spurs used in cock-fighting; and all through Chinese history there are fragments of literature quoted in which the poets sing the glories of successful cocks. The Emperor who reigned from B.C. 32 to B.C. 8 used to go out *incognito*, disguised as the servant of one of his male favourites, in order the more freely to gratify his love for cock-fighting and horse-racing sports.

Camel-fights and ram-fights are mentioned by the Chinese as having been in vogue amongst the Tartars. Over a thousand years ago the people of Kuche (on the road from Turfan to Kashgar) were said to inaugurate ram-fights and camel-fights

during the week's holidays at the new year, and to judge the prospects of harvest by the results. Schuyler, in his book on Turkestan, also describes ram-fighting as being a favourite Usbek amusement. Long before Kuche achieved a high place in Central Asian civilization, the Khan of the Hiung-nu (ancestors of the Turks) is described as enjoying the annual sports of horse-racing and camel-fighting at his nomad capital or chief camp. These fights, therefore, would appear to be essentially Turkish.

There are horse races and cart races every year a few miles to the west of Peking, chiefly in connection with the annual drill of the Manchu troops; but there is very little true sport about them.

The Chinese are very clever at making their nags "run" (as distinct from trotting and galloping). An even runner will fetch twice as much as a mere galloper. Trotting is not an admired movement. Peking mules are both bigger and stronger than horses, and cost as much again. No one seems to know where they come from.

Hawking was wont to be a great amusement in the extreme north of China, and Marco Polo gives very graphic accounts of the sport he witnessed in the days of Kublai Khan. Tribute of hawks used to be exacted from the tribes about Manchuria, and well-trained birds were very valuable indeed. Even now it is no uncommon thing in and around Peking to meet men in the streets with a hawk upon the wrist, sometimes wearing a hood; but very little practical use seems to be made of them now. I have made three journeys of a month each in the northern parts of Chih Li, bordering upon Mongolia and Manchuria, but I have never once seen a cast. The Chinese pretend that the hawks recognize a "king" or leader; and that, when a quarry is run down, the birds are trained to keep back until the king has first pecked out the eyes as a *bonne bouche*. It may be mentioned as a singular circumstance that in Canton the paper kite (*chi-yiu*) is literally so-called after the kite itself (*yiu*), known in Peking as *yao-tsz*.

Fish-spearing through the ice is an old Manchu sport; but the Manchus themselves are almost obsolete now, not to speak of their ancient customs.

Sedentary amusements are more to the taste of the Chinese than outdoor sports, and the various forms of gambling are, of course, the most popular of the former. Their playing-cards are about the same length as ours, but only half the breadth, besides being much limper. There is reason to believe that they must be at least as old as our era; but, up to the present, no one seems to have made a serious study of Chinese card-games. The most popular ones appear to be a kind of "beggar-my-neighbour" and "draw-poker;" and women play more than men.

Chinese chess has been carefully studied by several Europeans, notably by Mr. Hollingworth (1866), Professor Himly (1869), and Signor Volpicelli (1889). It is still a question whether China or India was the country which gave birth to the game, but it is quite certain that it was known to the Chinese at least before the first century of our era, if not much earlier. The Chinese chess-board, like ours, has sixty-four squares, with the addition of a "river," which practically means eight squares more. However, the men are not placed in the centre of the squares, as with us, but on the intersecting points; and they move along the lines. The Chinese stalemate counts as a win instead of a draw; and some of the pieces, besides skipping, are placed differently from ours. Otherwise there is great similarity between the two games. Amongst Europeans it is common to give the vague name of "chess" not only to the "elephant chess," which so closely resembles ours, but to the "surrounding chess," or a kind of draughts—the Japanese *gobang*, or, simply, *go*. There is reason to believe that *go* is merely a corrupted form of the Chinese word *k'i*, or *ch'i*, which the Annamese pronounce *kö*. The Chinese *k'ip'an*, or "chess tray," is, therefore, exactly the Japanese *goban*. Amongst both Chinese and Japanese the latter game is considered superior to elephant chess, and even the greatest statesmen are proud of acquiring a proficiency in it; for instance, the father of the Marquess Tsêng, when viceroy at Nanking, was considered one of the most formidable checker players in China. The Chinese regard it in much the same light as the Germans do *Kriegspiel*, i.e. as a useful exercise in wit and strategy.

Dice seem to have been known to the Chinese as far back

as history goes. They are not shaken, as with us, in a box, and then thrown out; the custom is to grasp them in the hand, and then flick them sharply into a common rice-bowl. There are three different games: one played with six, one with three, and a third with two dice. These games were explained in great detail by Mr. Jordan in the *China Review* for 1880. In buying cakes, sweetmeats, etc., in the public streets, it is quite a usual thing for the purchaser to "go double or quits" with the itinerant hawker, who keeps a dice-bowl temptingly handy for his clients' use. I have not heard that the secret of loading dice is understood; but I suspect it is, for anything a Chinaman does not know in the cheating line is not worth knowing.

*Fan'tan*, or "turn-over," is the most popular gambling amusement, and almost every one who has visited China will be familiar with it, as seen in Macao, where, under Government protection, it brings in a considerable revenue. After two or three years of flourishing, the Hongkong Government has at last succeeded in inducing the Chinese authorities to close the *fan'tan* shops at Kowloon opposite. The banker, in view of all, grabs a handful of copper cash or paste counters, and claps a common rice-bowl over them until the bets are made. Then with a chopstick or rod he separates four counters at a time from the mass, until only one, two, three, or four (*i.e.* none) remain. There are thus four bets, and it is not unusual for a half-starved-looking Chinaman to put ten dollars on at a time. Many Europeans drop considerable sums, for the game soon becomes exceedingly fascinating; and of course each inveterate gambler has a "theory" which he works out (invariably at a loss to himself) by taking down notes. In this game the banker seems to have no advantage whatever, unless it be that the odds are laid in such a way as to give him an extra chance. I forget how much is paid on each win.

*Hwa-hwei* is another form of gambling very popular in the southern provinces, especially in Foochow. Out of thirty-six placarded names each spectator mentally selects one, and makes his bet on it; meanwhile the banker has taken a slip of paper with one of the thirty-six names upon it, and has hung it up in a bag before the eyes of all. The successful

guesser gets thirty times his stake. Here, of course, there is an advantage of one-sixth in favour of the banker. The bag is opened by the player who has staked the largest sum.

There is another Cantonese game called *Pak-kop-piu*, or "white pigeon tally," which gives a great deal of trouble to the authorities; denunciatory proclamations appear from time to time. I have never ascertained exactly why it is so called, but it consists in each player choosing ten names, from twenty selected each turn by the banker out of a stock of eighty. Each ticket costs a farthing, and when all have taken tickets, the banker writes, in view of all, any ten names he chooses out of the twenty originally selected. No one wins anything unless five of his names appear, when the stake and a third more is paid back; if six are alike, he gets sixteen times his stake; if seven, 160 times; if eight, two taels\* and a half; if nine, five taels; if all ten, ten taels.

The celebrated *waising* lottery is now in full swing at Canton. It is a bet upon the name or names of the successful candidates in the examinations for degrees, and has also been explained at length in the foreign press of China. In 1874 the Peking Government made a *bonâ fide* effort to put a stop to this lottery, which causes incalculable damage in the Canton provinces; they even went so far as to degrade the new Manchu Viceroy, Yinghan, who was accused by the Chinese governor and the Manchu general of disobeying the imperial order. But unfortunately the only result of this admirable policy was to throw the profits into the coffers of the neighbouring Portuguese colony of Macao, without in any way putting a stop to the gambling evil. In the end the central Government, in its own interests, was obliged to lend official sanction to the lottery once more, and now the right to sell tickets is officially farmed out to the highest bidder; the contractors last year (1896) paid in advance 1,600,000 taels for six years, which, even at present low rates of exchange, means £150 a day; but, as silver is just as valuable in China as ever, £300 a day is nearer the effective mark; that is, 3000 tickets a day, at a dollar each, must be sold before any question of making a profit or even of defraying expenses comes in.

\* \* \* \* \*

\* A tael was 6s. 8d. a generation ago: now it is but a third of that value (in gold).



Of innocent family or social amusements there are not a few. The most common and popular is perhaps shuttlecock, which, unlike our game, is not played with a battledore, but with the insteps, sides, soles, and heels of the feet. The hands may not be used at all, but the elbows, knees, hips, and shoulders may. Many of our readers may have seen the performances of the Burmese athletes who have recently been exhibiting in Paris and elsewhere; in this case the shuttlecock was replaced by balls and globes; but the principle is the same. The game does not appear to be a very old one; perhaps it dates back 500 years or more. A group of young men stand round in a circle, and, keeping their eye steadily fixed upon the movements of the shuttlecock, endeavour by kicking it up with their feet or knees to keep it from falling to the ground. I have seen the same game played in Siam, Japan, and Burma, from the last-named of which States it may possibly have come. The Burmese play it best.

The common swing is mentioned at least 2000 years ago, and seems to have been derived from the Tibetans and Tartars; at all events, it is said to be a northern amusement.

It is a curious fact that balancing on the tight and loose rope is almost invariably done by women, and, strange to say, by women with deformed feet. In general conjuring, the Chinese are not to be excelled, even by the Hindoos.

"Punch and Judy" is occasionally met with, but I have never seen it south of the Great River. In the province of Sz Ch'wan I once came across some marionettes. The performers stood behind a large sheet lit up on their side, and the audience sat in the dark in front of the sheet. The figures were of painted wood or cardboard, transparent enough to show the colours through the light, and the men dangled them about with sticks and strings. Very likely this amusement was also derived from Burma, for I once saw some very excellent marionettes of the same kind in Tenasserim. As early as B.C. 1000 an ingenious Chinaman is recorded to have made "wooden men that could sing and dance," and history states that "these were the first beginnings of marionettes." Another account says, however, that they, with the manipulators, were introduced into China by

an obsequious courtier so late as A.D. 633 ; but his only reward was punishment for bringing such "uselessly ingenious individuals" into the palace. In the south of China the marionettes are dangled from above by strings, somewhat after the Burmese style. In Hankow, marionettes seem to merge into "Punch and Judy." Of course the Chinese "Punch and Judy," though often exactly the same as ours in principle, differs somewhat in detail, the character of Mr. Punch being totally unknown to the Celestials.

"Blind man's buff" is known all over China, and differs in no way from ours. The name is the same, *i.e.* "blind man feeling."

"Cats' cradle" is played both in Peking and Canton, and of course does not offer much scope for novelty. The Chinese call it "picking involved thread."

Paper kites are said to have originated about 1500 years ago. The Emperor was desirous of conveying messages from a beleaguered city to his friends beyond the enemy's lines, and, in order to do this unobserved, he fashioned a number of false kites attached to strings, and packed with despatches. I have myself seen paper or silk kites flying so like a real bird that I called for a gun in order to take a "pot shot" at one, which persisted in soaring just in front of my window at Hoihow in Hainan Island. There is a legend that a thousand years earlier than this a Chinese philosopher fashioned a "wooden kite," presumably out of shavings ; paper had not then been invented. But, as this kite collapsed after one day's flying, not much importance need be attached to the tradition. In some parts of China *Æolian* harps are attached to kites, and hence in Peking the kite is, by a sort of synecdoche, styled "an *Æolian* harp." In that city it is also the practice to attach harps and whistles to the legs and wings of pigeons, the result being a very weird, melancholy, and even touching series of howls in the air, which very much puzzle the new arrival. It is quite true that old men as well as young boys may be seen flying kites at the proper season (autumn) in China, and the Chinese are undoubtedly far ahead of all other nations in this matter. Some of the kites are enormous as well as artistic productions, and resemble flying dragons, tigers, cranes, and gigantic bats, all of a most

life-like character. Some are lit up, or carry lamps. Kite-fighting consists in so manœuvring that the string of one kite is sharply dropped or hitched up so as to cut the other as nearly as possible at right angles. On one occasion I held, for a few moments, a large kite which appeared to be about a mile away ; besides cutting my hand, the monster nearly carried me off my feet. The various rattles, whistles, and other musical devices forming part of the kites' tails are often worth a special study ; but the tail is by no means a necessary appendage to a Chinese kite, which may be of all shapes, and flies equally well with or without a tail. Kites thirty or forty feet in length and breadth are occasionally seen, and these, of course, require a powerful "anchor," human or other.

Whipping-tops are common all over the north. I have only seen peg-tops in the south—at Canton, where they are called *ninglok*, and in the island of Hainan. The *ch'e-me*, or teetotum, is used chiefly for gambling purposes by itinerant "sweet" sellers, etc.

The Italian game of *mora*, or finger-guessing, is invariably played all over China after festive dinners, and the loser has on each occasion to toss off another cup of wine. The ancient Egyptians knew this game, and for the matter of that they knew of the game of draughts too ; but that is no good reason for assuming that the Chinese derived any of their notions from Egypt.

The Chinese do not show up very well in athletic sports ; such Olympian games as they have are either of a military nature or are derived from the Tartars. Mention is made about 1200 years ago of the "tug-of-war," exactly as played by ourselves, except that, instead of all pulling the main rope, the adversaries each of them clung to a smaller cord attached to the chief cable. The "Red-cap Mahomedans" of Peking (a banner or military colony brought from Turkestan over a century ago) have an annual gathering in the West Ch'ang-an Street, where pole-climbing, song-singing, and miscellaneous athletic sports are the order of the day. No Chinaman has any idea of boxing, and any Englishman can at once floor a Celestial by a single well-delivered blow in the chest. It is of no use to give a Chinaman "one in the

mug," for his head is as hard as iron. As with all Orientals, a Chinese has a singularly weak spleen, and it is dangerous to hit him in that region. Chinese military athletics have been amusingly caricatured, or rather correctly described, by the witty Abbé Huc. There is really little or no exaggeration about his description. I once arranged at Wênchow for a party of British bluejackets to meet in a festive way an equal number of Chinese "braves;" the bluejackets were to exhibit their usual cutlass, single-stick, and other exercises, while the Chinamen in turn were to go through their pirouetting, spear-thrusting, etc. Anything more ludicrous I never witnessed, but at least it must be confessed that such capers must conduce to bodily activity. The Chinese seem to think that it pays best by fierce yells, rollings of the eyes, hissing, spitting, and brandishing of arms to frighten the enemy from coming on at all, rather than to beat him methodically back when he is actually there. They also seem to forget that force must be economized if a man is to have any stay in him, and that every caper, every gnashing of the teeth, every howl, means so much strength dissipated. With bare fists, half a dozen bluejackets would "knock spots" out of a hundred of the best Chinese "braves;" but it must not be forgotten (in case they ever try it) that the Chinese, like the Frenchmen, know how to kick too; and besides, they are apt to hit under the belt, gouge out the eyes, and, generally, fight as foul as possible.

The chief military exercises, largely introduced by the Manchus, are horse-archery, foot-archery, practice with the halberd, lifting the stone, and raising a sort of exaggerated dumb-bell, consisting of two small stone wheels upon a long wooden axle. Horse-archery consists in galloping along a straight sunken course for 300 yards, and shooting at four targets as the horse passes them. The bow is officially placed at twelve "forces" of  $13\frac{1}{3}$  English pounds each—*i.e.* a total force of 160 pounds is required to tighten it into condition for shooting the arrow. But this is only at the grand examination before the Emperor; at the earlier examinations the horse bow is only of three, and the foot bow of five, "forces" or powers. The halberd weighs from 80 to 120 pounds, and is twirled over the head and shoulders with

great address and activity. The stone weighs from 200 to 300 pounds, and has two "ears," or sunken hand-holes in the sides whereby to lift it; the operator has to raise it up to his knee. The "dumb-bell" is raised very much as ours is, but the chief exercise consists in holding the arm upright and allowing the instrument to pivot rapidly round as the hand grasps it in this position. Spear-thrusting requires little explanation; Chinese spears are often twenty or thirty feet long, and usually carry a triangular flag at the upper end.

Wrestling is not unknown amongst the pure Chinese, but the Mongols are its chief patrons; those who come to Peking annually on official missions are bound by law to perform before the Emperor. When I was at Peking, some of us occasionally tackled the stray Mongols we met in the street, but we found them our matches. The Japanese carry wrestling to the pitch of a fine art; nevertheless, Archdeacon Gray, of Canton, about twenty-five years\* ago, took off his coat to one of their professionals, and soon made him bite the dust; the gallant and venerable archdeacon in question had picked up a notion or two in Cumberland. The Chinese have a word for "boxing," but there is no more fancy art in it than there is in the street scimmages of Liverpool rubbing-stone women. Chinamen fall like chaff before the British fist.

As marksmen with the gun, the northern Chinamen are not by any means to be "sneezed" at. I have often met tiger hunters on the frontiers of Manchuria, and with a few native curs and an old rusty gun they seem quite able to bag a first-class "Bengal" animal. Duck and goose shooting is rather amusing. A swivel-gun is fixed to the bow of a boat, and the craft is then steered in the direction of the birds; when the right direction is secured, one man lets fly at a flock, and certainly manages to hit a good many of his objectives at once in this way. Still, the Chinaman envies the facility with which the European brings his single bird down on the wing; as a rule he likes pot shots on the ground. There is no such a thing as poaching in China; any man can go on any other man's ground, and shoot what he likes at all times. The Imperial hunting-ground is no exception when once you are in it. Most game is secured by trapping, and in the

\* This was first published in 1897. See *John Chinaman*.



winter-time you can get bustards, pheasants, deer, boar, etc., etc., almost for nothing. On the Mongolian steppes we used to "hunt" the *hwang-yang* ("yellow goat," or *Antelope gutturosa*); but, though we saw thousands of them, we never got near them, not even near enough to shoot at them. The Manchus were used, until a century ago, to hunt big game by beating up fifty or sixty miles of country in a circle of soldiers, until a regular menagerie of tigers, wolves, camels, deer, boars, etc., were forced into the centre, when a battue took place; but the last four Emperors have given up this sport. The Emperor K'ang-hi was a fine old sportsman. It was he who put a stop to the hawk-tribute in 1682, because it involved so much hardship. The following literal translation of a letter to his Mongol grandmother at Peking will give a notion of his fishing and culinary skill. He wrote from the Sungari River:—

"Your subject had a very delightful journey from the Shan-hai Kwan (Pass) to the city of Mukden. The beasts were as numerous as the fish were lively, and each time I ate of them I thought what a pity it was I could not hasten to lay a dish before my sacred grandmother, the Double Dowager. After reaching Mukden, I cast the nets myself, and caught some roach and perch, which I managed to cook. I dosed one course with mutton fat, and pickled the other for you. I now send it by express, with my best love, and shall feel amply rewarded if you find it toothsome. Also some wild chestnuts which fell during our picnic; some wild walnuts; and some persimmon cake submitted by the Coreans."

[Since the above first appeared, I have found that the Cathayan and Turkish Emperors of China (over a thousand years ago) played genuine polo—the *gu-u-chogán*, or "ball stick," of the Persians. Some writers use the form *tchaugan*, in its Greek form *τζουρνιον*. The old Chinese words for "strike ball," or polo, are, in Pekingese, *chi-chü*; in more ancient form *kik-kuk*, or *tjik-tjük*.]

## BOOK VIII

### *POLITICAL*

#### CHAPTER I

##### A PLEA FOR RUSSIA

How many are there of those who inveigh against Russian "perfidy" who have ever been to Russia or have even seen a Russian? In my own case, if chance had not taken me to a remote corner of the world, where a number of Russian officials and merchants were settled (temporarily, like myself), and if I had not been led to study Russian in order to kill time, I should never have visited Russia; and if I had never visited Russia I should never have modified my preconceived opinion of what the Russians were. I am therefore an exceptional case. I have had the unusual good fortune to live amongst Russians of the official and mercantile classes, to have studied Russian, and to have travelled all over Russia; and yet I feel myself ignorant. What, then, must be the condition of those who, at best, have only the same newspaper and book facilities for informing themselves that I have, and who have never had even my limited experience? I have \* never seen a single Russian except as above stated, and therefore I presume the vast majority of my countrymen cannot of their own experience know anything about that interesting people.

Now, then, what has Russia done? Until a hundred years ago the whole of Siberia was an unknown waste, the total population not exceeding that of the City of London. The wretched Samoyeds, Chukchi, Kamchadales, Buriats, and Tunguses, who thinly populated certain corners of it, lived a

\* *I.e.* had, in 1896.

life very little removed from that of brute beasts. Now, all these peoples have the advantage of regular markets; many of them are Christians, though the Russians do not press their religion forcibly down the throats of foreigners. High-roads run from the Pacific to the Atlantic; official post-horses convey the traveller safely and cheaply from every town of the slightest importance to the main road joining Irkutsk with Nijni-Novgorod; steamers cross the Baikal and ply regularly up and down the Amur, Ussuri, etc.; the new railway\* has already been opened as far as Tiumen, and will soon take us in six days from the Urals to the Pacific; the wretched Usbeg khanates of Bokhara, Khiva, etc., which a generation ago were dangerous hot-beds of Mahometan fanaticism, unsafe for any Christian white man to visit, are now as mild as "sucking doves." The barbarous Turkomans have been reduced to order; trade flourishes in the Samarcand region, and indeed all along the Turkestan and Chinese frontier; the Affghanistan and Pamir questions have been provisionally if not permanently settled, and Russia injures us in no way whatever.

As to her desiring a port free from the ice in winter, why on earth should she not have it? This, of course, is quite independent of the question whether the British naval position in the Far East is likely to be threatened by Russia's purchasing or seizing a port which would interrupt British communications in time of war. For purposes of her own, Russia has now a large fleet in Chinese waters; why, is no particular business of other Powers to question. Surely, as she has the fleet, it is reasonable that she should have some place to float it in. At present† the Chinese have given her permission to winter her fleet in the bay of Kiao Chou,‡ on the south side of the Shan Tung peninsula; but there seems to be nothing to prevent the fleets of other Powers from going there if they choose. Besides, the Japanese still hold Wei-hai Wei on the north side of the same peninsula, as security for the proper carrying out of their agreements with China; and as Russia openly objected to one clause in the Shimonoseki treaty, and made a naval demonstration with a view to preventing the permanent occupation of Liao-tung by Japan, surely it is a

\* Now completed.

† 1896.

‡ Afterwards seized by Germany.

corollary of Russia's first action on behalf of China that China should facilitate its completion in case circumstances require it. Could anything be more monstrous than the claim of another Power that the action of Russia's Fleet in Chinese waters must be confined to the summer season? China has no fleet now. The German Fleet is almost beneath notice.\* The French Fleet has plenty of work to do further south. Unless the Russian Fleet be at hand to see justice done to China, what is to prevent the Japanese from demonstrating in the Gulf of Liao-tung whenever affairs take a turn against what they suppose to be their interests? Finally, Russia is a first-class Power, with a navy of at least the highest rank in the second class. Apart from the experiences she has had in Europe, where for two centuries she has been cooped up in the Baltic and Black Seas (in both cases frozen in as well), is it reasonable to expect a Great Power to consent to the self-effacement involved in confining her naval base to such a port as Vladivostock? Moreover, the audacious activity of the British admiral in 1886, when one fine morning the Russians awoke to discover that he had entered that naval harbour unobserved with a large squadron, and was quietly lying at anchor under their very noses, notwithstanding the supposed torpedoes which were guarding the entrance, was of itself sufficient to rouse the Russians from their lethargy, and to set them looking for a larger field for their naval evolutions than the coast between Nagasaki and Possiet. It is a perfectly fair diplomatic argument that if Russia permanently strengthens her naval base, we have an equal natural right to purchase or conquer counter-privileges for ourselves by, for instance, arranging with China, Corea, or Japan, for the transfer of an island or a harbour;† but so long as Russia is cautious and sagacious enough only to stipulate for privileges which we also are at liberty, under the most favoured nation clause, to enjoy, so long is it silly to rail at Russian "perfidy"; it behoves us rather to exercise the same prudence in our own diplomacy, and to take quiet but firm measures to redress the lost balance, if lost it be.

How many people in England have studied the Russian character for themselves? I entered Russia for the first time

\* This was so in 1896; but, of course, not now.

† Wei-hai Wei.

by way of Teschen in Austrian Silesia, full of all the prejudices which I had been taught in my youth to harbour and cherish. When I first saw the booted officials, underwent their summary dealings with my passports and my baggage, and witnessed generally their absolute air of authority, I felt that my worst anticipations were about to be realized, and that I was in the land and the clutches of human ogres. But I soon found that, formalities once over, the Russian railway officials were excellent, kind-hearted fellows. I was particularly struck with the fact that they were as obliging to the poor as to the rich. None of the overbearing, boorish snappishness of the German (though I must allow that of late years even the Germans have improved); none of the peevish, impatient spitefulness of the French, or the arbitrary coldness of the American "conductors"; my experience was that the Russians had all the good qualities of the English—in which, of course, I include Irish and Scotch—who are universally admitted to be the most obliging of railway officials; and with this further advantage, that in Russia, "tips," though of course acceptable, are not a *sine quâ non*. I have been over nearly every railway system in Europe and America, and I unhesitatingly affirm that the Russian railway arrangements are ahead of them all, so far at least as the refreshment department is concerned. Halts of two minutes in every twenty, five in every hour, and ten or twenty every three or four hours, with ample time for "square meals," may seem excessive to some; but it must be remembered that all lines are single, so that in any case there must be delays for shunting and passing; distances are enormous, and appetites cannot be summoned at a moment's notice; business generally is not so urgent as it is in more populous countries. It must also be remembered that, though Russia will soon count her hundred million,\* yet her area is so great that this makes a very small number of persons per square mile. The greater part of Russia is a flat, scrubby, marshy, dismal plain, with towns few and far between. Accordingly, her railways are suitable for long distances: all the best and none of the worst points in the American system are there. Even the third-class carriages have a proper retiring-room, lavatory, and

\* Already far exceeded.



supply of drinking water. The prices at all refreshment stations are fixed by law; there is no delay, no bargaining; and the quality is good, especially that of the tea, which is served boiling hot, in tumblers, with lemon in place of milk.

At the time I was in St. Petersburg the Czar Alexander II. had only recently been assassinated, so, of course, suspicious characters (which all strangers, native or foreign, naturally are) were watched more closely than usual. But after once my passports had been exhibited, I was never interfered with in the slightest degree—and this holds good for the whole of Russia—until I reached Odessa, where the Governor readily acceded to my request (contrary to rule) to be allowed to depart that same day, without awaiting the usual lapse of three days for inquiries to be made. I was never asked a police question of any sort in the interior, was only once called upon to exhibit my passport, and everywhere found all classes of Russians to be the most good-natured, easy-going, obliging, and inoffensive people. Moscow and Odessa are as civilized [in every way as St. Petersburg; that is to say, as to telegraphs, trams, newspapers, shops, hotels, and creature comforts generally; they are second only to Paris, London, Berlin, and Vienna. Travellers must be prepared for a certain amount of roughing it in other towns; and unless they speak a little Russian they will certainly not enjoy themselves very freely. But Russia is not to be blamed for not civilizing herself all in a generation. Two centuries ago Russia, only just emerging from a long period of Tartar domination, had barely succeeded in regaining that degree of settled and material civilization which she had already acquired before the Mongol conquests began; but it must not be forgotten that, even in Elizabeth's time, in London itself, wattle houses were only just beginning to be superseded by brick and stone; reeds and straw by carpets; horn and paper by glass windows. The saying that "you have only to scratch a Russian to find a Tartar" may be figuratively true so far as the masses and their gross habits are concerned; but it is absurd to suppose for an instant that the Russians are anything but an Aryan race like ourselves. To this very day their numerals may almost be described as being good Sanskrit. Nor must it be forgotten that until

Alexander II. freed the serfs, nearly the whole population consisted a generation ago of agricultural "villeins," much after the style of the conquered English of the eleventh century. But at present there is no country in Europe where more is being done by the Government for the development of the masses, the improvement of intercommunications, and the encouragement of trade. True, there is official corruption; but what was English public life a century ago? What was the conduct of voters a single generation back? How about the Panama scandals in France, and "lobbying" in the United States? The vice of spirit-drinking to excess is only too apparent in Russia; even the popes or priests are no more ashamed to be seen drunk than were English statesmen at the beginning of this century. But revenue considerations cannot be grudged to Russia by a nation which supports an opium monopoly in India, and which spends over £200,000,000 a year on its own drink. Moreover, the climate has to be considered; inhabitants of all cold countries, be they Mongols, Russ, Swedes, Lapps, Scotchmen, or Esquimaux, have all this failing. Finally, the recent crusade against the Jews\* of Russia was, put in more favourable language, simply a determined effort on the part of the late Czar to check the ruinous habit, growing in such alarming proportions, of mortgaging the *mujiks'* property to Hebrew liquor farmers.† Persons who undertake the defence of a rival nationality are apt to be carried away and go to the other extreme. Therefore I will not deny that the Russians have their weak points. They are, comparatively speaking, a slovenly and grimy race, "of doubtful linen;" although, as a matter of fact, they take more hot baths, man for man, than do the British people hot and cold put together; and their grime is largely owing to their calling, their poverty, and their climate. Practically, there are only two seasons, winter and summer; and summer is so short that there is hardly time to shake off sheepskins and take an airing before the bleak wind forces the *mujiks* to put them on again. The majority of Russians are tricky and untruthful, as is always the case with people who for centuries have been ground down by oppressors and left in a condition of crass ignorance.

\* Alas! since then, Kischeneff.

† Now a Government monopoly.

It is only fair to observe, however, that this characteristic tends to disappear in soldiers, seamen, and others who are subjected to regular discipline ; in the now gradually rising *bourgeois* classes ; and, generally speaking, in those who handle civilized tools in any form, such as men of science, engineers, manufacturers, the higher class of artisans, and so on. Still, it is foolish to attempt to deny the national defect : the utmost we can do is to palliate it by the reflection that, at all events, it is usually coupled by a good-natured, live-and-let-live, tolerant blarney, and deceives no man who has his wits about him. It is a fact that the Russians, as a race, are inclined to be procrastinating, unpunctual, forgetful, idle, and, in a word, unbusinesslike. On the other hand, there could not be a greater mistake than to suppose, as is generally supposed in England, that the average Russian is a truculent individual. On the contrary, the Russians are one of the gentlest and most inoffensive of peoples, in addition to which there is a natural and deep-seated earnestness, piety, and devotion of character, devoid of cynical fickleness, militant aggressiveness, or namby-pamby Mrs. Grundyism. There is something extremely natural and appropriate about Russian development, which leaves upon one the impression that a humble and timid race has just successfully emerged from a dark age of oppression and starvation ; that it knows its own weaknesses and the poverty of its surroundings ; that it eyes with emulous respect, without envy, the superior advantages of neighbouring peoples, and is resolved to plod on, wearily but manfully, until it obtains a share of these good things for itself. There is nothing of the self-complacent Yankee, the contemptuous "Britisher," the jealous, spiteful Frenchman, the greedy, underhand German, the haughty Spaniard, mean, treacherous Italian, or selfish Dutchman, about the ideal Russian. I do not mean to say that the above enumerated weak points are the essential characteristics of the peoples mentioned ; nor do I assert that all Russians are free from these failings. I rather style them the points which in each case a psychological caricaturist would select to express a feature bred of race differences. There is nothing mean in the Russian thus psychologically caricatured ; with all his dirty linen, unbusinesslike ways, chicanery, untruthfulness,

forgetfulness, and corruption generally, he is friendly, un-arrogant, kindly, loyal, full of dog-like gratitude, earnest, unashamed of his religion, doggedly patient and faithful, and never stingy or a coward. British military and naval officers invariably find their Russian colleagues—rivals, or enemies, as the case may be—"good fellows."

I do not conceal from myself that these characteristics of the main body of Russians are often conspicuously absent from the diplomatic body, that infinitely small minority—practically the same in all European countries—which pulls the strings of the international Punch and Judy show, or, as Sir Edward Malet puts it, represents the buttons of the garment of decency which covers or conceals the national jealousies and hates. Diplomats, clubs, dress-coats, official dinners, and all the paraphernalia of what is called "society," are almost exactly the same, whether you are in Constantinople, Washington, or Paris. The masses have nothing to do with this phase of national idiosyncrasy, or rather national obliteration. The ways of diplomats are everywhere the same. The tax-payer must not fondly imagine that their sole occupations consist in poring over blue-books or yellow-books, receiving spies in secret cabinets, copying acres of despatches, wrestling with champions in the lying art, and forming delicate combinations of policy. The average diplomat, be he Russian or English, is bored to death for half his time, more especially at the semi-civilized and humdrum Courts. His chief preoccupations are getting furlough and killing time, making two ends meet, trying to secure acting posts or "missions to report," and endeavouring to evade, as much as possible, the unpleasant duty of copying. The duties of diplomacy come, like a game at football, quite incidentally into his daily life, nor do the "diplomatic arts" he is instinctively impelled to use in order to win the game and gain "kudos," worry his conscience or harass his sleep any more than do the tricks of the football-player. Outsiders are just as apt to exaggerate the unscrupulousness of the diplomat's efforts on behalf of his country as they are to overestimate the importance of his calculations. To watch how the cat is likely to jump, how the ball is likely to move, take advantage of it, acquire renown and pleasurable



excitement by winning the game—this is all. A smart thing may occasionally be done by unusual luck ; but, after all, there is not much in diplomacy, and the Press of rival States is apt to excite its readers unduly by taking too serious a view of diplomatic perfidy. How many points of difference are there between Russia and Great Britain ? So far as ninety-nine hundredths of the Russian coasts and Russian frontiers are concerned, none whatever. The trade with Russia is enormous : it may be subject to shackles which we do not like ; but in what way do the Russians treat our traders less generously than do the French, the Germans, the Americans, or any other rival nation ? Moreover, though we may grumble at the treatment our merchants receive in these days of our Free-trade, it must not be forgotten that our own Navigation Laws, Corn Laws, and Commercial Tariffs were very harshly directed against all foreigners until Queen Victoria's reign. Personal points of difference there are none. Englishmen are always well treated in Russia ; one hardly ever hears of official rudeness or breach of hospitality.\* Facilities have been readily granted to English missionaries to examine the gaols and the prison life ; English or American explorers, such as Burnaby, Schuyler, and Younghusband, have been courteously received even in districts where no foreigner could reasonably be expected to go without exciting suspicion ; and Russian officials are always ready to stretch a point in order to humour the persistent free-born Briton. What particular perfidy has Russia shown ? The old story of Peter the Great's will and Constantinople is still there. Since Peter the Great conceived his ideas of vaulting ambition, we have annexed numerous Indian States, Burma, Hongkong, a great part of Malaya, a million square miles in Africa, Fiji, and (to go to the Sultan's own dominions), in a temporary sense, Egypt. Has Russia been less gentle to the Turk than we have been ? Has she appropriated more of the Sultan's dominions ? Has she annexed more khanates in Central Asia than we have done kingdoms or principalities in India ? Have not Khiva, Bokhara, Kokand, and the Turkomans, improved vastly under her Christian rule ? In what way has Russia's presence in Asia really injured our

\* The recent case of Mr. Braham is certainly a "regrettable incident."



interests in India? Russia may want a port in Corea free from the ice. We ourselves should also be much the better off for a naval station farther north than Hongkong.\* But Russia, during the scare of 1885 consequent on the Penjdeh incident, never occupied any Corean territory as we did Port Hamilton. Russia, on the whole, treated China very justly and generously in the Ili question of 1880, nor has Russia attempted to take undue advantage of Chinese weakness in those parts since her defeat by Japan. Russia has made a very reasonable settlement with us in the Pamir region. Certainly the Russian Press is often full of virulent articles against Great Britain; but are not all the presses of Europe, the British Press included, in a chronic state of diatribe one against the other? The Russian Government, which is supposed to be so absolute, is only too glad to allow the Press full liberty in criticising foreign countries—if possible, to the advantage of Russian patriotic sentiment—so long as it will leave the Administration alone to deal with the urgent questions of the day at home.

There seems to be no reason whatever why we should not be friends with Russia politically, as we are socially, offering her a helping hand in every reasonable way, and making it to be her interest to lend us a helping hand too. Sooner or later the rotten Turkish Empire must go; the wonder is that Christian Europe has tolerated so long a barbarous Tartar misgovernment in its midst. Russia had two centuries of Tartar experience under the grinding tyranny of the Mongols, and when the Turks have cleared out “bag and baggage” as a political Power, the wonder will only be why they were not driven away before. Of course, it is only as a political Power that they are doomed to extinction. The industrious Mussulman peasants will find as perfect protection under the Russian, English, or French flags, as do now the remnants of the Mongol hordes in Kazan and the Caucasus; the Cypriots; and the Moors. With a powerful Government at our head, and with six or seven years of steady popular support in prospect, there is no reason whatever why the whole Eastern question should not be settled in a dispassionate, friendly way, both with Russia and with

\* She and we have now both got our needs.

France. Nor is there any reason why Russia and England should not come to an understanding, with or without the co-operation of China and Japan, regarding the future of Corea.

To sum up, there is no ingrained hostility whatever between the Russian and the English peoples. Russian civilization, though later than, and consequently behind the English, is doing as much for the improvement of Asia as is English civilization. Life and property are as safe for Englishmen in Russia as for Russians in the British Empire ; there is no political antagonism necessary. Though the unconditional presence of Russia at Constantinople or in Corea might threaten our commercial interests, there is no reason why a fair arrangement should not be come to, under which all Powers concerned may share proportionately in the settlement. The Press of Great Britain has, by the prudence and self-restraint of its utterances, placed itself and the country in a very favourable position in view of the Venezuela and Transvaal difficulties ; \* it is to be desired that the asperities of national feeling, so far as they exist on either side in ignorance, may be gradually softened down by the practice of the same moderation in Russian matters. Such moderation and good feeling are certain to be reciprocated, and the result will inevitably tend to bring about that great *desideratum*, a thoroughly straightforward understanding between Great Britain and Russia.

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## CHAPTER II

### THE BALANCE OF POWER

ANY one who attentively reads M. de Pressensé's last interesting paper in the *Nineteenth Century* will perceive on mature reflection that it amounts in effect to this : Russia and France have, in his opinion, just succeeded in forming

\* This was written early in 1896, after the Jameson "raid."

a counterbalance to the Triple Alliance, and the only uncomfortable part of the arrangement is that the weight of Great Britain thrown on either side would disturb the equipoise; hence both alliances, or both branches of the precarious balance, uneasy at their own hazardous position, are equally apt to view the deciding factor, Great Britain, with hostile feelings, so long as they feel the possibility that the latter may in a given emergency be a foe instead of a friend. Thus there is permanent danger to the British Empire, which may at any moment be torn to pieces owing to her obduracy in not taking beforehand one side or the other. This being so, M. de Pressensé further enters into the question, Which side ought Great Britain for her own safety to take? Shall it be Short or Codlin?

Of course these great questions of State, before they become acute are, in a large measure, solved *in petto* by the statesmen in power for the time being in each State. There are diplomatists to act as buttons to the garment which, we are told, decently covers the jealous contortions of that half-naked monster, the European Concert: then there is the public Press alternately to stimulate and repress public opinion; there are financiers, socialists, adventurers, and others with axes of their own to grind, to agitate the slackening strings; and last, but not least, there are now and again restless monarchs, with much autocratic power, who can do a great deal of mischief, despite the wishes of their ministers and their people. But although the governing powers and the Press are always in evidence, and may seem to monopolize the leading rôles of the human stage, it must not be forgotten that, in these times of universal popular education, there is a large substratum of "general public" which thinks for itself, and when the time comes for action, or for voting, decides for itself. Just as in religion the priest and the parson may exhort and denounce to their hearts' content before respectful audiences assembled according to custom in places appointed for sermonizing, so in politics this or that leader may confidently air his views before a regulation audience by the prescriptive right of personal repute or of office. But, after all, most persons in every congregation who have any thinking capacity at all go home in these days

and make a practical religion for themselves. And the same way in politics : there is a vast body of plain unpretentious individuals, possessing no prescriptive right to speak as literary men or as politicians, who, when it comes to taking a resolution, know perfectly well what they will *not* do ; and these men in Great Britain form the latent power which creates and overthrows ministries.

First, let us review in a few words the position of Great Britain during the sixty years of Queen Victoria's reign. The increase in population, railway development, sea-borne trade, area governed, etc., etc., between 1837 and 1897, has been on a scale absolutely unparalleled elsewhere in ancient or modern times. There is nothing on the surface of the British character to account for this clearly ; and moreover that character is a complex one, consisting as it does of the dogged, cold, exclusive English temperament ; the equally dogged but clannish Scotch, the vivacious, intelligent, but capricious Irish ; all welded into one active whole. Taking ourselves, however, in this mixed sense, we are decidedly inferior to the French in lucidity, precision, and wit ; to the Germans in physique, patience, discipline, and thoroughness ; to the Americans in inventiveness and versatility ; to the Spaniards in sobriety ; to the Russians in humanity ; and to the Italians in *finesse*. What is it, then, in the national character which accounts for Great Britain being the only country free from passports, political spies, police bullying, trade protection, religious domination ; the only country in which administrative power effaces itself by instinct in place of asserting itself ; where would-be subverters are protected as tenderly as those who wish to preserve the existing state of things ? It is difficult, and perhaps unnecessary, to define what it is that infallibly produces the same characteristics everywhere under British rule ; but it may be doubtful if the Scotch and Irish contributions would either of them succeed so well in forming part of the successful compound were it not that the dispassionate English hand has always been the one at the helm. Germans have their own colonies, but will not go there ; Frenchmen protect everything in their colonies except their own credit balances ; the Americans, in spite of millionaire-creating resources, somehow fail to make the two



ends of government meet. It is only in Great Britain and her dependencies that full scope is given to all energies; where Europeans of all kinds have absolutely equal rights with Englishmen themselves; in short, where a man can do what he likes, and say what he likes, free of administrative censoriousness and meddlesome interference. Even in the United States, executive power is often irritating almost to the point of seeming tyrannical.

It is naturally galling to other nationalities, oppressed by conscription, police prying, financial collapses, Press inquisitions, and what not, to see so much national prosperity attained at such a little cost to individual liberty; and to this feeling of universal envy is superadded one of personal dislike, when the somewhat contemptuous attitude of calm indifference unconsciously displayed by Englishmen abroad is taken into consideration. In other words, England, though almost the only place where all men live on equal terms, or at least have equal chances, is an object of jealousy to every one outside. Luckily, however, England has looked after her defences with increased energy of recent years: powerful rivals have had their own special difficulties to keep them in check, and we have so far survived the ordeal without any considerable diminution of prosperity and power.

But at present things are in a very parlous state in Europe. France, though the wealthiest country in the world in productivity, is taxed in money and men to the utmost of her capacity; she would probably be more restless than she is, had she not practically ceased to breed. Germany is a poor country with rich pretensions; at the rate she is breeding she will soon be unable to sustain her population without more elbow-room. Italy is prematurely played out and bankrupt; without a long period of national rest and prudent finance she can never secure ease and prosperity for the overweighted units of her population. Austria, divided as she is into three distracted nationalities—one affiliated to Germany, another to Russia, and one standing alone—continues to exist as an empire only by force of habit. Turkey, at least in Europe, cannot possibly be tolerated as an independent State for another generation, no matter what is said to the contrary. Another administrative carcase, in the



shape of China, will soon \* be ready for the vultures hanging around her, unless she can manage to galvanize a little life into herself. The United States have many irons in the fire : Cuba and Spain, Hawaii and Japan, various disputes with ourselves, the financial question, and the "coloured rights" difficulty. In this sea of political trouble Great Britain drifts about like the rest of them, and the question is suggested to her by M. de Pressensé : "What shall she do to be saved ?"

I have intentionally left out Russia, for Russia has nothing whatever to fear from external foes, except, perhaps, from Germany. She might possibly be wounded in the Black Sea or at Vladivostock, but in neither case would the life pulsations of the Empire be seriously affected. Russia requires nothing but peace ; looking back upon her past history, she quite understands that her development has been most unhappily retarded by unnecessary wars ; and apart from the fact that the Czar Alexander III. was by temperament personally inclined towards peace and quiet for their own sakes, it was in his reign that circumstances combined to force clearly upon leading Russians generally the conviction that in the peaceful development of their own resources lay the only true road to happiness and success.

For the present purposes let us leave out of consideration the past. In the relations of Russia and England, in connection with Turkey and Central Asia, mistakes may have been made, and probably were made, on both sides, for which both sides have been equally to blame. Let us merely consider the present and the future. There is absolutely no point in which we cannot treat, independently of all other nations, direct with Russia upon matters concerning our joint interests with her. There is really no cause for hostility or suspicion. So far as the North Sea and the Baltic Sea are concerned, there is every prospect of trade development between the two countries on mutually advantageous terms. England is Russia's best customer for food products ; and even if Russia's protective system were an ungenerous one to us—which, on the whole, it is not—it is to Russia's interest as much as to ours that the trade should be on fair give-and-take principles. The way in which Captain Wiggins and

Mr. Popham have been encouraged to assist in developing the Siberian river trade holds out every hope that increased national friendliness will be one of the results. In the Black Sea we can now hardly be said to have any interest beyond that of shipping. The future of Turkey is an insoluble riddle at present, and much depends upon the fate of the Austrian Empire. No wars or alliances can well modify one result : whether the German element of Austria does or does not merge itself into Germany, what remains of the Austro-Hungarian Empire must in the end gravitate towards the East ; and whether Austria shares with Russia, or abandons to Russia, the approaches to the Black Sea, it is certain that Great Britain will never be established anywhere on the Constantinople side of the Sea of Marmora. In a word, if Russian statesmen will only be reasonable to British trade prospects in and near the Black Sea, there is no reason why England should attempt to thwart Russia's policy in Turkey, whatever arrangements she may make with Austria.

In Central Asia the recent settlement of the Pamirs question practically closes all difficulties except that of Persia ; or, at any rate, it prevents any reopening of difficulties so long as both parties maintain the sincere desire to be friendly. And as to Persia, that is no pressing matter ; we cannot map out the future of the world for our grandsons. In any case, there is no reason why, if we come to a general understanding with Russia all round, that question should not be included in the bargain. Though no one thinks much of Tibet now, it is certain that before very long there will be a Tibetan question, in connection with which Russia, in her present reasonable mood, may be fairly expected to regard the Bramaputra, and all the other rivers which flow south to the sea, as beyond her sphere of action. The most difficult question of all is Russia's naval position in the China seas ; and this one might have become more acute had it not been for the sudden rise of Japan, which State must now be counted with, along with us, as a possible determined rival. It has been suggested that the German occupation of Kiao Chou points to an understanding with Russia ; but in the present capricious state of German policy, when no man, even in Germany, knows what the morrow may bring forth, it is

extremely unlikely that Russia would be instrumental in encouraging such a leap in the dark, though it be one certain in any event to weaken Germany's naval position at home, and one which can scarcely be said to threaten Russia. If we look back at Russia's dealings with China, we see that her relations have always been friendly and fair. In the Amur boundary question, 200 years ago, the Russians and the Manchus were equally conquerors and explorers. It is, indeed, said that the Russians once removed the boundary stones in a tricky way; but that is also a very old Chinese trick, and, in any case, one of which local officers on a remote frontier might easily on either side be guilty. On the whole, the history of the Russo-Chinese trade relations up to our own times points to prudence, loyalty, and even considerate gentleness on the Russian side. It is often said that the Russians did a smart thing in filching Primorsk from the Manchus after our last war with China. Perhaps they did; but there was no violence; it was all a matter of fair negotiation. In the Ili question, eighteen years ago, the Russians restored certain territory, and honourably swallowed the leek in a way which no one expected to see. Here, again, they had "smartly" and successfully negotiated with an incapable Manchu envoy in Russia. But his work was disavowed; Ili was demanded in accordance with Russia's promise, and was duly given back. In the same way with Bokhara, which, as a vassal State, is now much more helpless than was China in 1880: Russia has honourably abandoned to her the States of Roshan and Shignan, in accordance with old claims justified by Bokhara.

I do not for a moment mean to take a brief for Russia, whose statesmen are probably individually neither worse nor better than the rest of mankind. But what I do say is that her Asiatic policy generally seems to have been honourable "as a whole," due allowance made for "psychological" considerations. Russia's whole attitude in the world is far from being an aggressive one; of all the Christian missionaries in China, Mongolia, etc., the Russian are the only ones who "mind their own business," and are not actively "militant." Nothing could be more conservative and tenacious than the Orthodox Church, but it only holds fast to what it has already

got, and forces no stranger into its fold except by considerations of self-interest; in short, it is a mere political engine, worked with the same moderation which characterizes Russia's action all round.

For purposes of her own, with which we have no immediate concern, Russia has thought it advisable to ally herself with France. The underhand "reptile" Press of Germany is always harping upon the "irreconcilable divergence of interests" between ourselves and Russia; but there is no reason to suppose, whatever France's motives may have been, that Russia, in consenting to an alliance with her, coveted France's assistance against ourselves, or felt in any way the need of France's support for her safety against our attacks. True, Russia has dropped seeds in Egypt, Abyssinia, Alaska, and Siam, which are intended to grow and serve for future use as occasion may require; but those are mere diplomatic moves of a perfectly legitimate character. However much we may wish that Russia would accommodate us more, it must be admitted that her policy is free from dirty tricks and violent surprises; in short, regarding her Government as a human being, in dealing with Russia we feel that we have to do with a gentleman.\*

We have no reason to fear Russia; Russia has no reason to fear us. Our position may be exposed to danger, chiefly external; but it must not be forgotten that Russia is also exposed to danger, chiefly internal. She desires peace as much as we do. So far as England is concerned, Russia can afford to be indifferent to the French alliance; but she requires it in order that she may develop her resources free from the bugbear of Germany on her flank. We have no need of France's alliance, either to protect ourselves against Russia or against Germany. Consequently there is no interest to compensate us for tying ourselves down and throwing our weight in the Franco-Russian scale. Were we to do so, and were peace preserved, we should find nothing we want from Russia which France could help us to get, and nothing we want from France which Russia could aid us to get without playing false to France; whereas, if war broke out, we could take care of ourselves. On the other hand, there are several things France

\* The mysterious Russian policy in Manchuria now hardly supports this view.



wants from us, and it is certain that if she could she would take them from us now by force with Russia's assistance, without going out of her way to prove to us, as M. de Pressensé endeavours to do, that it is for our own interest to "make advances," and give her what she wants of our own accord. But peace would probably *not* be preserved in this way ; the formal adhesion of England to the Franco-Russian alliance would mean such a preponderance of naval and military power that the Triple Alliance (which means Germany for this purpose) would be reduced to intolerable insignificance. In that case Germany could not afford to keep the peace. There is no reason why we should not settle our differences with France independently of Russia (who has really little concern with them), just as we can settle our differences with Russia independently of France.

Our differences with France are many. There is the west coast of Newfoundland fishery question. If a local bargain were made, France would probably willingly barter the right to make herself disagreeable on the coast of Newfoundland for a counter right we possess to pull down any fortifications she may erect on her islands of St. Pierre and Miquelon. But neither Canada nor the United States would agree to this. Then there is the Egyptian question, in which Russia only has a moderate interest ; but even that moderate interest would not be made any greater by Russia's aiding France to obtain complete command of the Suez Canal both by land and by sea. The West African difficulty looks serious, but at bottom it is more a question of *amour propre* than general utility. The French have not the same calm and practical way of dealing with such matters that the Russians have. A leading Frenchman, M. le Myre de Vilers, made a speech the other day in which he boasted of France's "paralyzing" British hopes in the Indian Ocean. This expression puts the whole French attitude—I mean, of course, the attitude of the *intransigeants*, or unreasonables—in a nutshell. As a colonial power France has been a failure almost everywhere : her few great steamer-lines are all subsidized ; her trade is heavily protected ; she has hundreds of soldiers to "protect" each colonist ; and her colonies do not afford a career for her young men. Yet the sight of



British colonial success is so galling to her that a large portion of the French people consider, with M. de Vilers, that they are amply rewarded if they can only "paralyze" the action of their successful rivals without obtaining any tangible advantage for themselves. The Russians, on the other hand, are doing solid, useful work wherever they go—sending out colonies, building railways, and introducing public order : there is nothing empty or showy about Russian occupation. It must be admitted that the French are exceedingly liberal in creating steamer-lines without trade, "docks" or warehouses without cargo, roads without traffic, and so on ; in their colonies, moreover, there is, coupled with a certain feverish individual tendency to bully, a generous public capacity for safeguarding the rights of the *indigènes*. In short, sentiment, theory, and science—all admirable qualities in their way—are the leading features of French rule, which too often cripples trade, frightens away capital, unsettles the natives, and never pays its way, even in Algeria. On the other hand, wherever Russians open out a country we find them associating in an easy-going, careless way with the natives, scrupulously protecting their religions and customs, encouraging trade communications, and, in a word, absorbing the region into the Russian administrative system ; in fact, the Russians have a mission, and are practical colonists like ourselves, only that they move on a different line, or rather, on a different gauge. So long as a majority of influential persons in France persists in taking a spiteful view of colonial policy, so long will there be friction between the legitimate expansion of Great Britain and the fictitious showiness of French efforts, which may be compared with those of a sculler who has not the remotest prospect of winning the race, but who claims the right to occupy part of the course, and to take his chance of picking up something by a foul. This state of affairs would not matter much were it not that Russia, in order to protect herself against German aggression whilst her whole resources are devoted to developing her internal wealth, had found it useful to enlist the general countenance of France, which arrangement necessitates on the part of Russia occasional counter favours to France in directions where her own interests are not touched. In this way Russia

can make herself disagreeable to us in many parts of the world without our being able to retaliate with the same light hand. Russia wants nothing from us in any part of the world ; she does not even want money, so long as she can keep France in a good hopeful humour. Thus it falls out that, though there is nothing whatever to make the solid Russian interests clash with ours, or to prevent perfectly above-board and honourable dealings between ourselves and Russia, she is often forced in her own interests to abet the unreasonable pretensions of France. The remedy would, of course, be to conciliate France in such a way that she would have no interest in thwarting us, or in inducing Russia to aid her in doing so. This, in fact, brings us round, though by a different route, to M. de Pressensé's position : " Are you strong enough to stand alone and risk our combining to destroy you? Are you sure that we are not strong enough even to do this without running the risk of forcing you into the arms of the Triple Alliance ? "

There are several answers to this question. First : " If you are really so strong, why proclaim it from the housetops, and invite us to share your strength? Why not force the world to keep the peace by exposing your strength ? " Any great Power may plunge all Europe into a murderous general war by rash or deliberately violent action ; and if such great Power be determined to do so, or to risk doing so, then Great Britain has no choice in the matter, whether she be driven to it by intrigue or by force. The only thing we can do is to look unceasingly to our naval defences in the first instance ; and, if possible, to strengthen also our second line, fighting for our lives when the time comes. In the event of a coalition against us, things would undoubtedly go hard ; but, after all, if things are to come to that pass, a man can only die once—and he must die once—whilst the slaughter of millions is only the hastening of individual events under circumstances of unusual excitement. Life is not worth having, at least to many of us, except under the conditions of freedom to which we have been accustomed, and we had better all perish than accept dishonourable conditions. Besides, we might succeed in turning the tables upon our enemies if we stood up to them with a stout heart.

Nations imbued with these sentiments do not, however, easily perish. Apart from what we can do ourselves, we have kinsmen beyond the seas ; and although there are many points of difference between us and the United States, they, as well as our own kinsmen, are not likely to stand by whilst a Frenchman aided by a Prussian, or a Russian, holds a sword to our throats. Again, as I have said before—allowance made for human weaknesses and diplomatic guile—the Russians require peace for their own development: the masses are only just emerging from savagery and semi-starvation: a general war with risk of revolution would by no means suit Russia's calculation even from a purely interested point of view, and apart from all moral considerations. But there is another important point to be considered. In our ignorance of the Russians as a people, we are apt to picture them a cruel, treacherous, greedy race, without any high moral sentiment whatever. When I was in Russia I watched all classes very carefully, and to my surprise I found that the Russians, especially the ignorant and uninformed, held the same false idea of us: they seemed to consider that we tyrannized and tortured Ireland, just as we supposed—perhaps rightly once—they humbled Poland; they honestly felt that, pleasant fellows though we might be, with plenty of cash to spend, we were as a race brutal, grasping, domineering, cunning, unscrupulous, meddling, hypocritical—in short, almost everything that is bad, except cowards. On the other hand, I found that the Russians by temperament were without exception the gentlest, most easy-going and humane nation in Europe—and I have seen them nearly all. Their defects are many; but the leading feature in the Russian character, high and low, which stands above faults of which they have their full share, is an enthusiastic, generous humanity, easily moved to sadness and tears; full of expansive gratitude for kindness; free from meanness, pettiness, and cunning greed. In short, it struck me, the more I contemplated the Russian character, that they were the only people in Europe who possessed several of the better characteristics of ourselves. The Russians are not so fond of fair play, not so truthful, not so energetic, not so manly as we are; but, on the other hand, they are less hypocritical,

more truly modest ; gentler, more tender, more truly religious, more humane, and less brutal and violent in every way. This being so, I decline to believe that the Russian nation as a body, or the Russian Government as its representative—which shares the virtues and vices of that body—would ever lend itself heart and soul to an aggressive general war for mere purposes of spite and plunder ; and in this matter, far inferior though the Russians are to their new allies in intelligence, wit, vivacity, and many other noble qualities, they are by temperament superior to the French.

Finally, even in France it is by no means every one that shares the spiteful sentiments of the extreme colonial party and the gallery Press. The hard-headed, solid masses, though easily moved to foolish enthusiasm, in their calmer moments must see that Great Britain is doing them no harm in any part of the world, and is not threatening them in any way. Even in Egypt, our occupation has been of great advantage to French investors. French financiers have not succeeded in establishing an equilibrium at home : could they have done the work we have done in Egypt ? What privileges do British subjects enjoy in any part of our Empire which the French cannot share ? That France is at the head of civilization in many respects no one can deny. No Christian missions are more disinterested or more devoted than those of France. In literature and art, in refinement, polish of manners, industry, charity, public enterprise, science, good taste, luxury, and in many other admirable things, she is unsurpassed, if not unequalled. No country is more pleasant to live in, and she has no surplus population clamouring for an outlet. There is really no reason why her interests should clash with ours, if she would only be content with her natural sphere. As the admired entertainer and caterer of Europe, she has no call to cut a figure abroad. Our gloomy climate has no charms for half the year : it is only by labour or outdoor sports that we can pass the time without *ennui*. The population has far outgrown the food resources of the land. Emigration is an absolute necessity. When we do emigrate and undertake the administration, we are the only nation that shares and shares alike with all nationalities. We retain no exclusive privileges for British subjects. Why, then, should



our action be "paralyzed"? Why should not France endeavour to meet us at all points in an equitable spirit? Why not encourage us?

As to leaguings with the Dual Alliance for the destruction of the Triple Alliance, or *vice-versâ*, it is conceivable that the violence of either might drive us in self-defence to adopt one or the other course; but, since there is a balance of power, why not leave it thus balancing? England has never threatened either France or Germany, and is pre-eminently the Power whose interests lie exclusively in peace. What harm is there in her lying, like the United States \* for instance, beyond the sphere of the balance? Why should she not negotiate successfully her matters of mutual interest, either with each of the two Alliances as wholes, or with each Power of either Alliance as units? It may be true that her outside position gives her power to do harm by giving a preponderance to one of the two balances; but, on the other hand, either alliance, or any member of either, has the power to precipitate war if it chooses. Why, then, should England be particularly suspected? Seeing that the vast military forces of the Continental Powers are now balanced, surely England is the one Power *par excellence* fitted by Nature to stand off, when it is remembered that she possesses no aggressive military force at all? The naval forces of the two Alliances are also balanced. Why should England's preponderance in naval force be grudged her, seeing that it is practically her only defence?

Germany's present position is singular. It is remarkable that the most patient, scientific, orderly, and philosophic people in the world should allow the popular voice—which in Germany is far from being the voice of rashness and ignorance—to be overborne by the votes † of Imperialism; or rather, as M. de Pressensé puts it, of Prussian particularism, of an unusually domineering and unsympathetic kind. It is perhaps a great loss to the world that the noble Emperor Frederick had not a longer life, for it is he of the three who was truly *der weise Kaiser*. Under his sage and moderate guidance the best qualities of the newly aroused German race would almost certainly have been developed, after their

\* Since 1898 the United States' position has changed. † Scarcely so in 1903.



centuries of dormancy under foreign political tyranny, in the direction of constitutionality, unmenacing to the rest of Europe. Excuse may readily be found for the rough, not over-scrupulous genius of a Bismarck, during the transition period when Germany was emerging from a chrysalis state. The unlooked-for attack upon hopeless and defeated China, almost within a year of the date when an equally unexpected show was made of protecting that Power from dismemberment, instances the possible uses to which the German navy might in future be put if the Reichstag were to give the Prussian *Junker* clique a perfectly free hand. No man knew then what the morrow might bring forth in Germany, and no man knows now what any ambitious action of Germany might not bring forth in Europe, or in China. The aggressive, restless activity which kept Napoleon III. perpetually under the eye of Europe, and finally brought about his fall, seems to be occasionally imitated nowadays by Germany. In justice to the present ruler, however, and to his Council, it must be admitted that the success of the alarming Kiao Chou *coup* does not seem to have permanently turned their heads, but rather to have sobered them down a little since the year 1898 began, and to have led to a more considerate attitude towards China.

Sentiments adverse to militant aggressiveness abroad are indeed held by many Germans, if not by the majority of them, at least in nearly all the States but Prussia; but political liberty is in some respects at a lower ebb in Germany now than it is in very Russia. Even private letters received from Germany are worded with caution. The Germans as individuals have always been a timid race, though never lacking in collective courage to fight for their liberties. They seem so overawed by the police, and by military privilege, that the great thinkers, the scholars, the millionaires, the territorial nobles, suggest the attitude of a class of school-boys with their eyes furtively turned up at the master's cane. In Russia, as we all know, the arm of Government is evident enough, and in the hands of indiscreet officials often becomes tyrannical and unjust; but there at least we have ignorant masses to deal with, and a conscientious paternal master. Alexander III. died one of Nature's gentlemen, according to Lord Salisbury's official eulogium. The Czar Nicholas II. has also used his

personal influence with a prudence and correctness which compel respect. If the ruler's agents occasionally fail him, it is not always the fault of the Czar, nor even of his ministers. At least the Government chief strains every nerve to improve the position of his shaggy flocks : no question of personal ambition, undue submission to foreign allies, or family pique comes in here ; and, as in the case of M. de Witte, the humblest Russian may aspire to become a high officer of State.

But the Government of Germany is not either by any means the German nation. The Germans, of course, vary, and a Prussian is not the same as a Bavarian or a Saxon. Yet, taking them all round, the Germans, left to their own better judgment, free from police espionage and hectoring, are a quiet, reasonable, sentimental, plodding people ; rather more sensuous in their pleasures than we are ; not so gentle as the Russians ; but more timid, and nearly as kind-hearted ; rough and ungracious in manners ; either religious enthusiasts or religiophobes ; somewhat sour-tempered ; greedy, unless unrestrained ; less humorous than the Russians, less witty than the French ; careful, exact ; and, if harsh, generally as strong in character as in physique. The nature of the German is envious rather than jealous ; he has none of the frank, generous hospitality of the Russian ; he is essentially a selfish man ; rancorous, underhanded ; but not vengeful in the Corsican sense. A great many of these less beautiful characteristics are also ours ; but what the German often seems to lack is our sense of fair play, and our individual spirit. He has plenty of gregarious courage under discipline, and the German officer is full of fire and "honour" when a luckless civilian insults him ; but, man for man, the calculating German has not the generous *élan* of either Russian or Frenchman. He is the sort of man in his evil moments to hit you when you are down, which a Russian will rarely do at any time. It will be noticed that the shape of the average German's head is totally different from that of any other people in Europe. His character, in short, is one which easily degenerates into aggressive acquisitiveness, or relapses into patient docility, according to the influences which work upon it, and according to the prospects of gain without risk, or punishment without escape, which may seem to him imminent. The

recent behaviour of Germans in the Austrian Reichstag is a sorry instance of what civilized human beings of the Pan-German type may become under the provocative influence of race hatreds and disappointed expectations.

Yet there is no reason why we should not be as successful in conciliating the Germans as in conciliating the French and the Russians : there is no solid German interest which clashes with ours, except the interest of commerce. German commerce enjoys exactly the same privileges in English colonies that British commerce does. When Germany was not yet in a position to protect herself abroad, she never on any occasion ran any risk of injustice at British hands ; indeed, her policy was always the comfortable one of taking refuge under the wing of the British pioneer, who never once failed her. In the Far East British officials were always as ready to protect unrepresented Germans as to protect their own nationals. And since the volume of German trade has increased, things have not changed : even though (largely through the fault of self-sufficient Englishmen themselves) German traders have by their superior suppleness encroached upon the British trade preserves, and to a certain extent aroused the alarm and jealousy of British traders, yet there has never been any change in British policy. German trade is as safe abroad as ever it was. Germans prefer the freedom of England to the inquisitorial domination of their own colonial administration. German merchants are fully represented in English banks, English municipalities, English steamer companies ; German *employés* are as much appreciated as ever in English commercial houses. In short, if we put aside the inevitable commercial jealousy, which, after all, is no greater between German and English houses than between rival English houses themselves ; if we leave out of consideration the evil but transient national effect produced by rash and inconsiderate diplomacy, there remains nothing to justify the persistent harbouring and cultivating of national resentment. That we have successful colonies and Germany has not is no just ground for complaint, for we had them long before she became a *Weltmacht* ; and she is, and always will be, able to utilize them freely, just as if they were her own, for all commercial purposes. As a colonist the German (under his

own rule) is even more unsuccessful than the Frenchman : he seems to find it impossible to conceive any form of government but the domineering type. Let us hope that Herr von Bülow is serious, and that a new start on honestly liberal principles will be made at Kiao Chou. The picture of Heligoland as it now is—native populace forbidden to stand in groups ; dancing and concert rooms only open twice a week ; 2000 natives superciliously treated by the police and military ; bathing visitors coming across from Hamburg rarely and for days, instead of regularly and for months—all this (though Heligoland is not exactly a colony) is typical of the German official's impracticable ideas, and contrasts sadly with the good old days when six unarmed British bluejackets formed the sole "force" of the island ; when the town swarmed all the season with cheerful German families enjoying a whole summer's liberty ; when the inoffensive inhabitants spent their lives in groups examining the sea with their telescopes, preparing the skins of sea-fowl, taking service as pilots, and enjoying absolute freedom.

Just as there is no chance whatever of our joining Germany and her allies (with neither of whom we have any bone to pick) in order to protect ourselves against France and Russia, so there is no chance of our joining the Dual Alliance in order to inflict an injury upon Germany. That is, in each case, unless we are wilfully forced to do so. Let German trade go on increasing : we may be jealous ; but we shall do our best in a legitimate way to redress the balance. War can never break out between Germany and ourselves, except by the deliberate act of Germany herself ; and this is an extremely improbable event, so long as the resolutions taken in the Fatherland are left to the good sense of the German people themselves, and so long as they have the courage to resist unwise caprices which may drag them into hostilities, and perhaps the rest of Europe too. Socially, Germany is more class-bound even than Russia. In Russia there is an honest desire to develop the country and do no harm to any one beyond it ; and in any case Absolutism has the excuse that 95 per cent. of the populace are illiterate. But in Germany we have the singular spectacle of the best-educated and in many respects most capable nation in the world led at



the heels of masterful personalities. Have the people of Bavaria, Saxony, and the other kingdoms and duchies of the Empire no right to speak? Have not the people of these States as well-founded a stake in the Empire as the oligarchy of Prussia? Where is the joyousness in life if it is to be at the mercy of the inquisitor and the policeman for ever? Security is not a sufficient plea, for life in a prison might be justified on the same grounds.

The future of Europe really lies with the German people, quite as much at least as it lies with the supposed autocracy of the Czar and the supposed desire for revenge of the French. If the German people would only shake themselves up\* and insist upon their Government confining its action within constitutional bounds, there would be no question of preponderance and alliances, and the evil suspicions which now force the Continental nations to waste all their resources upon armaments might gradually fade away, and leave the course open for an era of arbitration.

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## CHAPTER III

### THE FAR EASTERN QUESTION

TO better understand the existing situation in the Far East, it is necessary to go back for several centuries, and to inquire how the present Manchu-Tartar dynasty seated itself upon the Imperial throne. The history of organized Imperial China is very clearly recorded for at least 2000 years; but the whole of this long period, anterior to 250 years ago, must, for the purposes of this article, be comprised within one or two lines: that is to say, the northern half of the Empire has been quite as frequently and as long under Tartar rule as under native rule. Owing, however, to the Chinese possessing a monopoly of the settled arts—by which are meant literature, and the capacity thence arising for organizing, recording,

\* The elections of June, 1903, bear witness to a great "shaking-up."



financing, and so on—it has invariably happened that the ruling Tartar races have become merged into the conquered Chinese people ; or, at any rate, have been so softened by settled civilization as to lose much of their primitive warlike vigour, and their capacity for domination. In this way the Mongol Tartars, formidable under Genghis and Kublai, ultimately became so degenerate that, 530 years ago,\* they in their turn were easily driven out by the native Chinese, led by an ex-priest of great ability, who founded a very powerful dynasty. This native dynasty was in turn supplanted by that of the Manchus, about 250 years ago.\* It will now be advantageous to explain who the Manchus are.

During the whole of the above-mentioned truly historical period of 2000 years, the greater part of the country which we now call Manchuria has been occupied by one and the same race, usually generically styled Tungusic. Subject to very modern Chinese immigrations, it still is so. It is certain that the Coreans once occupied the southern parts of Manchuria, which are now more than half Chinese, and it is even a question whether they are not a branch of the same primitive people as the Manchus. That, however, is an ethnological question far beyond our present scope ; if they are, their language has changed so much that they are now almost totally unrecognizable by the light of it. All the other Tungusic tribes have from time immemorial been hunters, and are still largely so ; not nomads, moving about with their flocks and herds after fresh pastures like the Mongols ; but wandering hunters, seeking fish, game, or furs, according to season, and, when settled, keeping pigs rather than cattle or sheep. These tribes have always been of widely varying degrees of civilization. The hunters of the Amur and Ussuri rivers are, in their habits, still very like what they were 2000 years ago. Those lying farther south naturally imbibed, from contact with their neighbours, a good deal of Chinese and Korean civilization. At times they were not unimportant factors in the border politics of those two nations ; they founded kingdoms of their own : either adopted Chinese letters pure and simple, or invented writing systems adapted therefrom ; and on several occasions actually ruled

\* This paper originally appeared in 1898.

as Emperors of North China, or forced the Emperors of China to pay tribute to them, and to recognize them as equals ; and all this took place before the Mongols were ever heard of, even by name.

During the century and a half of Mongol rule in China, say from 1210 to 1360, the Tunguses seem to have been treated with oblivious contempt, after being driven away north by their successors, and they are hardly so much as mentioned in Mongol-Chinese history. Almost the same thing happened during the first 200 years of the native Chinese dynasty, which, as above explained, succeeded the Mongols. But, about the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Dukes of Ninguta—the site of a powerful Tungusic capital over a thousand years ago—began to give trouble, and before very long these dukes coalesced into one petty State called “Manchur.” Thus the very word Manchu is barely 300 years old, nor is it at all certain what it means. However that may be, the first powerful Manchu ruler, Nurhachi, developed a genius for military organization ; he conquered and annexed all the neighbouring Tungusic tribes ; extended his expeditions as far as the Amur, Ussuri, and Yalu Rivers ; and, having discovered for the first time in history that nearly all these tribes spoke dialects of one and the same language, conceived the idea of creating a great Manchu nation. He died in 1626.

It was during this period of internal development that the Manchus came to blows with China, largely owing to one of the annexed tribes, which was as much Mongol as Tungusic, having appealed to the Emperor for protection. The Chinese were utterly defeated, exactly in the same miserable way that the Japanese defeated them in 1894-5. Growing bolder with success, the victorious Manchu chieftain advanced over much the same line that the Russian (Kirin-Mukden) railway is now about to take.\* Most of the Eastern Mongol tribes had meanwhile been either subdued or brought over by marriage alliances, and in 1622 the Manchu ruler had been in a position to move definitely farther south, and to make the old Korean city of Mukden, then an outlying Chinese garrison town, his capital. Part of his advance was along the line of the recent

\* It is now complete.

Japanese march; in fact, just before his death, he gained a victory over the Chinese almost exactly where the Japanese did, near the mouth of the Yalu River; and, hearing that the enemy was fortifying Port Arthur (Lü-shun K'ou), sent 6000 men to take it. It is curious how history repeats itself: it will be remembered it was at Port Arthur alone that the Japanese indulged in a massacre; the Manchus did the same; the exact words are: "Took Port Arthur, butchered all the Chinese soldiers, and destroyed the fortifications."

The second Manchu ruler, Abakhaye,\* at first held the modest title of Khan—an ancient Tungusic royal title, which seems to have actually originated in Manchuria and been carried westwards thence;—but in 1628 he styled himself "Emperor," having discovered that the Tungusic Tartar Emperors of North China, driven out by the Mongols, were, in fact, practically of his own ancestral tribe. Before carrying out his designs upon China, he forced the King of Corea to accept his protection; and then by degrees, after hard fighting, closed in southwards, and massed his forces on the Chinese frontier. His son's supreme opportunity arose in 1644, when a rebellion had broken out in China. Peking was taken by Chinese marauders from the west, and the Emperor of the Ming dynasty (who was the last of the direct line) committed suicide. In a weak moment one of the Chinese generals introduced Manchu aid in order to drive the rebels out; and, of course, when the protectors arrived in the capital they discovered reasons for remaining there. In other words, they declared the Chinese dynasty at an end, and themselves the rightful successors. From this step to the conquest of China, with the assistance of interested Chinese brought or bribed over to their side, it was simply a question of time.

The moral of the whole story is this. If, when the Japanese had gained possession of the Liao-tung peninsula in 1894-5, they had boldly marched upon Mukden and Peking, it is possible that, having possession of the two historic capitals, they might have bought over and secured the adhesion of sufficient Chinese statesmen to give them the Empire.

\* One account gives his personal name as Hoangdaiji. It is possible that Abakhaye may be merely the Manchu form of his Chinese-reign period: *T'ien-ts'ung*, "heavenly clever," from *abkai*, "heaven."

In any case, when, a few months later, they secured by treaty the possession of Liao-tung, they were in almost as commanding a position as the Manchus were in 1644, just before the conquest. It can hardly be wondered at that the Russians did not like this ; and that, once they had got the Japanese out, and had discovered how utterly weak the Chinese were, they should endeavour to carry into effect their long-cherished dream of opening up Manchuria to their own trade. The result of recent events is that Russia now occupies, in respect of the Manchu-Chinese Empire, almost exactly the same threatening position that the Manchus occupied 250 years ago in respect of the native Chinese Empire. The Manchus were invited in to drive out the rebels. The Russians have, in a way, invited themselves in to drive out or keep out the Japanese or other possible marauders (as they pretend). The Manchu Emperor now, as the Chinese Emperor then, is the last of the direct line, and has no children. In fact, his own succession is irregular, and twenty years ago a censor foretold the collapse of the Empire on this account. Then, *i.e.* 250 years ago, as now, Port Arthur was occupied, and Corea was forced to accept the protection of the new northern power.\* The main difference is that the Manchus had no rivals, or had already mastered their only possible rivals—the Mongols. But, unfortunately for Russia, she not only has rivals, but awkward partners to deal with ; and whereas the Manchus soon annihilated the rebels they were asked to drive out, Russia neither has, nor is able to, put the Japanese to flight. If left to herself, there would be absolutely no difficulty in the way of her moving on Peking, securing the archives, chasing away the Emperor, and taking over the vacant throne ; but, of course, that does not mean the subjugation of the really Chinese provinces. Before we discuss the shares expected by awkward rivals and partners, let us first inquire how Russia came to be in Manchuria, into which country she scarcely durst set foot four years ago.

Many persons must have noticed in *The Times* of about three weeks ago † a letter from Captain Younghusband, which

\* So far, however, Russia has not succeeded in ousting Japanese influence from Corea.

† 1898.



was reproduced in some of the provincial papers. He travelled with Messrs. James and Fulford through all three provinces of Manchuria just twelve years since,\* and, in comparing its present activity with the hopeless lethargy of 1886, he adds that he can describe without exaggeration the Russians as being at that time rather afraid of the Chinese ; knew next to nothing of Manchuria ; had no mercantile houses there ; and, in short, had fewer material interests to protect than we had. All this is confirmed in official language by the Russians themselves. The Ministry of Finance last year † published a work in two volumes upon Manchuria, in which the author, Mr. Pozdnyeyeff, states, after sketching the very modest efforts of Russians to learn something about the country, that the results of those three Englishmen's labours have become (to translate his own words) "one of our principal sources of information about Manchuria . . . and references to them may be found on almost every page of the present book."

The following is a short *précis* of the official Russian account, which, I may add, is fully corroborated by the Chinese annals. In 1643 certain Cossack adventurers sailed down the Amur as far as the mouth of the Sungari—the town of Khabaroffka is called after one of them who wintered there in 1651. The chief Russian stronghold was at Yaksa, also called Albazin, after the Tungusic prince Albazi, to whom it belonged. Stepanoff was killed in 1658, whilst endeavouring to explore the river Sungari, and "for two whole centuries" (to use again the original words) "the Russians do not appear on this river ; only in 1858, upon the conclusion of the Aigun treaty with China, did Count Muravieff obtain the right of free sailing and free trading on the Sungari for Russian ships and subjects." The Russians were able to hold out at Albazin until 1685, but here also (to use the author's language) "the struggle ended fatally for the Russians." In 1685–6 the Manchus repeatedly defeated them in skirmishes, and at last took the town, which by the treaty of Nertchinsk in 1689 was totally abandoned and destroyed ; the Russian inhabitants were taken off to Peking, where their descendants have been kindly treated to this very day under the care of orthodox Russian priests. According

\* In 1887.

† 1897.



to the treaty, the whole Amur river on both banks, from the river Gorbitsa to the sea, belonged to China, a range of mountains forming the frontier; and from that day until 1852, the Russians had no more to do with Manchuria than with Timbuctoo. Their trade was limited to Kiachta, and the old Eastern road to Peking, from Tsuruhaitu *viâ* Tsitsihar, ceased to be used. In that year (1852), the Governor-General Muravieff discovered that the Chinese had never asserted their dominion between the above-mentioned frontier range and the Amur. Having secured a ukase from the Czar, authorizing him to sail down the Amur, he started from the river Shilka in 1854, and the next year quietly occupied all the territory on the left bank. In 1857 China was at war with England and France; Canton was taken before the year was out, and in May, 1858, we captured the Taku forts—the sea gates of Peking. Russia accordingly took advantage of the situation to obtain from China a formal recognition of her annexations on the Amur. By the Aigun treaty, the whole left bank was confirmed to Russia, and even the right bank, from the mouth of the Ussuri to the sea: the important tract between the Ussuri and the ocean was “left for future discussion.” It need hardly be said that after the entry of the British into Peking, the Russian envoy, Count Ignatieff, succeeded by the treaty of Peking in securing this for Russia too. She was now for the first time in recognized possession of Tungusic territory, and commanded the whole coast down to the Corean pale. As already stated, “free trade” (to no foreigners except Russians) was nominally allowed by the Chinese on the Amur, Sungari, and Ussuri; but, notwithstanding this, Chebotareff was imprisoned and killed at Sansing in 1859, when he was endeavouring to avail himself of treaty privileges thus granted; and the various scientific and trading expeditions sent by Russians up to the year 1880, met with so little success that for fifteen years (to use once more the original words) “no Russian merchants cared to seek their fortune by trading on the Sungari.” It was only in 1895, after the Japanese had broken China’s spirit once again, that Count Cassini, the Russian envoy, prevailed upon the Peking Government to take the necessary steps to secure treaty rights.

It will thus be seen that, for two whole centuries, Russia was unable, in spite of her proximity, to make any headway whatever in Manchuria. It was only after the British and the Japanese, in turn, had prepared the way for her that she was able to assert herself; and she made no effective explorations, even in the two southern provinces, until British officers had shown her the way. So that, apart from her Siberian railway, and the need of an outlet for it, she has no prior claim at all to commercial privileges in that country; and, as Captain Younghusband suggests, we should, whilst duly appreciating her service to the world in opening up a hitherto neglected "buffer" region, be very careful to keep planted the foothold we have already got there, and not allow Russia to elbow us out, or to establish preferential trade regulations against our prior interests and our clear treaty rights.

To return for one moment to the Manchu conquests of 250 years ago. The eighteen regulation provinces (or China proper) were soon pacified, and in due course Manchu authority was asserted over Tibet, Kashgaria, and Annam; to a certain extent also over Nepaul, Loochoo, and even Burma and Siam. At no period had the Manchus any dealings with Japan, the recollection of the thrashing Kublai Khan's navies and armies had received at Japanese hands probably deciding the later dynasty of Tartars to leave the brave islanders severely alone. The Manchu power reached its zenith a hundred years ago, when all the countries above named (except perhaps Burma) were tributary. Up to this time the Manchu dynasty had been one of the best, if not the very best, the Chinese ever had, and no one is more ready to recognize this fact than are intelligent Chinamen themselves. It practically took over, untouched, the whole administrative system of its predecessors, the only serious social change being that the Manchu plaited hair cue, or "pigtail" (as it is usually irreverently called), was inexorably imposed upon the whole of the male inhabitants. The population of China proper increased thirteen-fold between 1645 and 1795. Though official corruption was as rife then as now, still there was always a huge balance in the treasury. The Imperial revenues collected came almost entirely from the land-tax and the salt dues. There were

other less important sources, such as licences and customs ; but it was tacitly understood that most of these minor taxes and collectorates should be for local use, or be perquisites in the hands of palace favourites who farmed them for their own benefit and remitted a portion of their gains to the palace. The whole effective Manchu population, never a large one, was collected at Peking, or at a dozen or so of great provincial centres, in the form of settled garrison troops, living with their families. Some of these centres were in Manchuria itself ; but the essential point to remember is that, except in Peking and in Manchuria, the civilized Manchus have always lived in military encampments, separated from the Chinese, very much as British troops live in cantonments in India. Thus, apart from fitful injury to the Manchu Empire caused by famines, wars, and rebellions, there has always been a persistent canker-worm gnawing at its vitals in the shape of 250,000 Manchu military families with nothing to do, drawing comfortable pay in money and rice, and thus eating up half the cash resources of the country. Manchus and other Tunguses not enrolled in these 250,000 or so of military families have either remained in Manchuria as hunters, or have mixed with the Chinese in Peking and Manchuria. The Manchu language is almost obsolete.

The eighteen regulation provinces of China are governed in the following way. Each province has a governor, and each group of two or three provinces has a governor-general (often called " viceroy "), sharing the control with the governor, but not at all his superior. In one or two cases there is, for special reasons, a governor-general, but no governor ; or a governor, but no governor-general. In any case, below these supreme officers, be they single or double, each province has a treasurer and a judge, and as a rule the governors-general and governors act on the joint proposition of these two high functionaries. Each province has from ten to fifteen prefects, governing territories as large as Holland or Belgium ; and each prefecture has under it from five to ten districts, each as large as a French department. There are very many more details in the Chinese civil administration ; but practically the above represents, in skeleton form, the true centralized working body for executive purposes. All these officials

may be either Chinese or Manchu. The Six Boards at Peking and the Cabinet Council (corresponding to our Departments of State and Privy Council) transmit their own or the Emperor's directions to the governors and governors-general, who despatch them through the treasurer and judge to the prefect, and thence to the magistrates. The district magistrates are thus the true working units; and nearly all matters, judicial, financial, or executive, pass through their hands. The amount of correspondence is enormous, but very methodical.

The way finance is conducted is as follows:—Each province raises from £100,000 to £1,000,000 a year in revenue, and, of course, this sum is pretty regular in amount, and well known at Peking. The Board of Revenue Control at the capital sends down its appropriations for the coming year to each province in the late autumn. The first and most serious charge is always the appropriation for the Peking Manchus, which item absorbs nearly a quarter of the total cash revenue. The Board says, for instance: "You will send £50,000 out of your land-tax for the Peking Manchus; £20,000 out of your salt gabelle for the palace; £50,000 out of your foreign customs for the frontier armies; £5000 from your *likin* in aid of such and such a province," and so on. One or two Chinese provinces send nothing, and require support. The three Manchurian provinces are largely supported by the eighteen Chinese, being in a disorganized pauper condition. The total Imperial revenue accounted for is about 70,000,000 taels.\*

The above is a sketch, meagre perhaps, but as adequate for immediate purposes as space will allow, of the financial condition of China at the time decay first began to set in. The expenditure was chiefly military; all the money was expended upon Manchu soldiers (250,000 men), Chinese provincial armies (620,000 men), official salaries, official couriers, and palace requirements. With the exception of about one-tenth of the whole revenue, annually spent in keeping the Yellow River in order (most of which went in squeezes), there was never any pretence whatever on the part of the central Government of doing anything for the people.

\* See special chapter on "Revenue."



Each province provided for itself, and each district did likewise. Public works, education, sanitation, roads, fisheries—all such matters were locally arranged by the people for themselves. Hence the entire absence of political cohesion. Peking was the great “squeezing” centre, and the capital of each province was the same thing on a smaller scale. All the Government did was to preserve order and pull the strings; the only difference between the Manchu Government and the worse ones which preceded it was that it preserved better order, kept eunuchs down, was very economical, and endeavoured to restrain tyranny and extortion within the narrowest possible limits. Above all, the first four Emperors, who together reigned 150 years, were able, conscientious men, fully imbued with a sense of their responsibility to mankind.

But with the fifth Emperor, who was a morose, dissolute man, decay began to set in; a great secret society rebellion cost China 100,000,000 taels (as much for China as £100,000,000 for ourselves) in three years. With the sixth Emperor, a man of obstinate, unaccommodating character, began the troubles with Europeans; and it was forty-five years ago, in consequence of financial dislocation, that the new system of taxation called *likin* was first devised.\* This is how it began. Under the seventh Emperor, a poor, debauched creature, the great Taiping rebellion had devastated half the provinces; the land-tax receipts were diminished by two-thirds, and to this day they have not recovered lost ground. The salt revenues were seriously reduced for the same reason. Hence, after the second war, we had no means to recover our indemnity, except by ourselves taking charge of the maritime customs. When the indemnity was paid, the Chinese Government, noticing the great advantage of keeping accurate accounts, maintained the foreign staff for the public benefit; and from that day to this, under the splendid management of Sir Robert Hart, the foreign collectorate has gone on ever extending its scope, until now the revenue thus collected by it almost equals, at present gold rates, the total silver revenue handled by the Peking Government forty years ago. But, as the land and salt revenues had been so seriously diminished,

\* See chapter on “*Likin*” (*China*, Murray, 1901).



the provincial governors were unable to remit the usual sums to Peking, or pay the expenses of their own Governments. Hence the *likin* system gradually evolved itself. This word means, "one per thousand," and was in its origin a trifling tax collected on produce passing inland barriers. As the treaties provided for a tax on foreign goods of, on the average, five per cent., and as the Peking Government naturally retained control over all moneys for which they received honest accounts, the *likin* system provided for the disappointed provincial Governments a handy means for securing a percentage on foreign trade, and for retaliating upon Peking by keeping the secrets of this new revenue, as far as possible, in their own hands. Of course, in time the nominal "one per *mille*" easily became one per cent., or even ten per cent.; and one station, taxing two or three leading staples, became 100 stations, taxing every conceivable object of necessity, foreign and native.

Until the Japanese war broke out, Peking and the provinces managed to struggle along pretty well, in spite of this financial nagging, and China always resisted the temptation to accept foreign loans, to which she only rarely had recourse, and even then only for trifling amounts, usually under non-Imperial guarantee. But the Japanese war, besides again disorganizing China's finances, saddled her with an indemnity of 200,000,000 taels, or, at the very least, thrice the amount of her total annual revenue; and in order to pay off this she has had to pledge, partly under Imperial guarantee, the whole of the only safe asset she has—the foreign customs revenue. This state of affairs not only leaves the Peking Government without its trusty nest-egg, but it makes the task of the provinces, which used to receive a share of the foreign customs revenues, and from which remissions of money are expected, additionally hard. Of course the first thought was to increase *likin*; but there were serious difficulties in the way. In the first place *likin* is recognized even by the higher Chinese governing class to be an evil device; it is not very much liked at Peking, because Peking has never succeeded in obtaining true accounts of the collection; it is extremely popular amongst subordinate Chinese officials in the provinces, for it provides a number of snug

billets and an extensive squeezing-ground, in place of the old land-tax, salt farms, and native customs, all of which have fallen off in value or have escaped from provincial control into the hands of syndicates; and, finally, *likin* has become so universal and grinding that it is a serious drag upon trade of all kinds, and causes frequent rioting. In short, the *likin* question creates dangerous strife between Peking (or the Manchus) and the provinces (or the Chinese), and unless it be abolished, or very carefully handled, it may ultimately produce a revolution. The troubles at Sha-shī, of which news came a few days ago, seem to be an instance in point.

There are two possible solutions. One is to abolish *likin* throughout the length and breadth of the land, and, by way of compensation, increase the duties collected at the foreign customs.\* This, of course, would give an immense impetus to trade; but without an *Ausgleich*, or agreement as to shares, the provinces would not easily consent to trust Peking with so much new power. Moreover, British trade is two-thirds of the whole; and even if we consented, other Powers, although doing but an infinitesimal share of business, might charge too high a price for consenting to modify the tariff.† Another plan is to place *likin* under the control of the foreign customs. This would also have a good effect upon trade, and the provinces would have a better hold on the proceeds. I believe this latter course is about‡ to be adopted as an experiment in one set of provinces along the Great River, part of the *likin* figuring amongst the securities for the last Anglo-German loan. It is a weighty experiment, and there are already rumours of a coalition between governors with a view to resisting any extension of this new idea in the direction of their own provinces—that is, the interior parts of them.

China is really in a woeful plight. After witnessing the cowardice of his soldiers in the recent war, the Emperor ordered the useless provincial Chinese armies to be gradually abolished, with a view to rigid economy; but here, again, there is a difficulty. In the first place, such sinecure troops

\* This is what Sir James Mackay is now trying to do (1902).

† This is precisely what some of them are trying to do. ‡ It has been (1903).

as exist are disposed to revolt or turn bandits when deprived of their accustomed pay; and, in the next place, most of them exist only on paper, and a good portion of their pay has for generations back gone into the pockets of the mandarins. The different Manchu garrisons, now almost as degenerate as the Chinese provincial troops, and habituated to a slothful life, are totally useless except for the purpose of protecting their city cantonments from Chinese attacks: they cannot be abolished; for, unless petted and paid, they would naturally ask: "What is the use of supporting the dynasty and being a Manchu?" For the last century all serious fighting has accordingly been done by specially hired bands called "braves"—mostly roughs. The Navy has been destroyed or captured by the Japanese, and there is no money left with which to buy a capable new one. As for railways and reforms, no Chinese trader will trust the mandarins with loans of money. As to the tributary States, they have been lopped off one after the other. Japan has taken Loochoo; France, Annam; Great Britain, Burma; Siam ceased to recognize Chinese suzerainty immediately after our first war. Corea has, under foreign pressure, declared her independence. Nepaul keeps up old forms, but is practically ours. The Manchu residents in Tibet are little more than honoured prisoners of State. Finally, as a *comble de malheur*, Germany, in piping times of peace, plants herself on Chinese soil almost under the very nose of Confucius's sacred descendant; whilst Russia, taking alarm, first of all secures permission to carry her railway through Manchuria; then marches troops into Manchuria on the plea that she is entitled by agreement to protect her railway engineers; and, at last, occupies China's best fortress as a terminus for her railway, adding 800 square miles of *Hinterland* to it without so much as asking permission. France, meanwhile, not to be behindhand, secures a naval station in the south. England emerges from the general scrimmage with some very important concessions, which, however, are all purely defensive in character, and contain no menace to the world at large. It may be presumed that Japan, which is still lying low,\* will yet have to

\* True enough, since the further disaster of the "Boxer" revolt, Japan has allied herself with England.

be reckoned with. Meanwhile she has secured a kind of reversionary right to Fuh Kien province.

We must now turn to Corea, and inquire how the Chinese war with Japan arose. Ever since the Manchus established themselves in China, Corea has paid regular tribute to Peking, and been a most faithful vassal. There was, until fifteen years ago (1883), absolutely no interference on the part of China in her internal administration: all she had to do was to send as tribute a few local articles of nominal value at fixed periods, for which she received a liberal return; and to apply for recognition when a demise of the Royal crown took place and a successor inherited.

But, 300 years ago, fifty years previous to the Manchu conquests, Japan had overrun Corea in a war of pure conquest; and though, with Chinese assistance, she was ultimately driven out, she never abandoned her foothold in the port of Fusan, which has always remained, under the *daimiōs* of Tsushima, as a port of commercial intercommunication. It was the persecution of missionaries and the ill-treatment of shipwrecked sailors that first attracted unfavourable attention to Corea in our time. In 1866, first the Russians, and then the French made unsuccessful advances to her; the Americans followed up with a punitive expedition in 1871; but it was not until 1876 that the Japanese were successful in making the first treaty. Their example was followed by the Americans, acting for themselves and the Chinese, in 1882. The diplomatic question now arose, "How can a vassal nation conclude independent treaties, especially with its own suzerain?" Like all diplomatic questions, it was solved by the strongest; for, after all, International Law is only a set of conventions accepted by nations of about equal strength. The British, French, and Germans all eagerly followed suit with treaties, and then the Russians appeared upon the scene. Corea at once became the centre of diplomatic conflict, each country taking the view of independence or vassaldom, which suited its own interests best. Intrigues, murders, and revolutions succeeded each other with alarming rapidity; until at last, in an evil moment, China, contrary to her agreement made in 1884-5 with Japan, decided in 1894 to send troops into the country to quell an insurrection.



Now came Japan's opportunity to pay off old scores. She had been quietly organizing her army and navy into a high state of perfection, whilst China had deluded herself into the belief that her army (eaten up as it was by incompetence and corruption) would be more than a match for the Japanese troops. As to the Chinese Navy, which the English officer, Admiral Lang, had just brought up to a very creditable degree of efficiency, she had suicidally ruined its bright prospects in the year 1890, when, in consequence of a fatuous insult offered to that admirable officer, Li Hung-chang allowed him to resign rather than apologize for the petty insolence of the self-sufficient native subordinates, who had grossly insulted him by denying him the right to fly his flag during the absence of Admiral Ting, the titular chief. Deprived of English supervision, of course the splendid navy, upon which millions had been spent, went utterly to the dogs, and, when the hour of trial came, naturally fell an easy prey to the Japanese. Every one knows how, after utterly routing the Chinese rabble armies by land, the Japanese possessed themselves of the Liao-tung peninsula, and part of Shan Tung; took by storm the naval strongholds of Port Arthur, Ta-lien Wan, and Wei-hai Wei; and dictated terms of peace to Li Hung-chang at Shimonoseki. This was the first time in history that the Manchus had been reduced to the humiliation of despatching an envoy to sue for peace in a foreign land. Besides ceding Formosa, and paying an indemnity of 200,000,000 taels, China had to agree to the occupation by Japan of nearly the whole Liao-tung peninsula, including the treaty port of Newchwang.

But now came in turn Russia's opportunity. The death of the high-minded Czar Alexander III. towards the end of 1894 seemed, for a little time, to have paralyzed Russian activity; but this was only for a moment. Prince Lobanoff soon brought his forces into line. It was evident that the presence of a rising and ambitious Power like Japan, planted between China and Corea in such a position as to enable her to absorb the latter at her leisure, and also to exercise a domineering influence over the former, was an intolerable check to Russia's new and great hopes, based upon the construction of a Siberian railway. Not only would Russia be



unable to get at China by sea without running the gauntlet of Wei-hai Wei and Port Arthur, but she would be unable to march troops into Corea without being forestalled by Japan, whose base in Liao-tung would be infinitely nearer to the Corean capital than the Russian base at Vladivostock. There was nothing particularly alarming for England in all this ; in fact, it was, in one respect, rather a tactical advantage than otherwise : but, if we take a calm and unprejudiced view of Russian aspirations, we cannot fairly wonder at her looking round for allies in order to check such potential developments at the outset. Of the motives of Germany and France in joining Russia's protest nothing is positively known, and it is probable that they had hardly mentally marshalled them, or quite understood them themselves, except that in a general way they hoped to extract advantage therefrom, largely at our expense ; and, besides, had felt a sort of pique at witnessing so signal a triumph on the part of a non-Christian Power, whose unexpected vigour had jarred their nerves a little. As for England, it is generally understood that Russia offered at the time to go hand-in-hand with her, even before she had recourse to France or Germany ; but I know nothing of that ; still less am I competent even to guess what our guiding motives were in declining the offer—if it is true we did so. I can only surmise that many Englishmen would feel inclined, on abstract grounds, to leave to a plucky little victor the fruits of his hard-earned successes, apart from the fairly obvious fact above mentioned, that it was not at all clearly our interest to check the rise of the only vigorous and healthy native Power in Asia ; and one, too, quite able to offer both naval and land opposition of a solid kind to any future overweening pretensions on the part of Russia.\* In any case, it is futile now to discuss what might have been. It is more to the point to discuss the facts as they are, since Count Muravieff the second—a name of unhappy omen for China—has got into harness.†

After the Japanese war things remained quiet for some time, and it was generally felt that no serious political explosions would take place until after the new Czar's

\* These considerations have since evidently prevailed.

† He died under circumstances pointing to anything but a personal success.

coronation and the Queen's Jubilee. China's behaviour was exceedingly disappointing during this period of grace, and her statesmen did not appear to have learnt a single practical lesson from their disasters. If she had set to work vigorously to reorganize her finances and get her rabble armies into effective working order, especially upon her frontiers, she might have been able to resist further aggression, and thus to earn the sympathy and goodwill of the Powers: but, instead of that, she continued to connive at treaty evasions; her provincial governors winked at the persecution of missionaries by ignorant mobs; she annoyed France in Tonquin; she made no drastic attempt whatever at financial reform; her envoy in London tried to kidnap a man at the Legation; she was not even able to prevent her rowdy troops from outraging the military instructors invited from Germany. Thus she lost sympathy, where she ought to have tried to earn it, all along the line. Meanwhile Russia was not slow to take advantage of circumstances. Having already received one fright, it was clear to Russia that her communications with the open sea would be once more cut off in Asia, as they had been in Europe, unless measures were at once taken to secure an outlet for the railway. Besides, if China was unable to protect her rich provinces from the incursions of the Japanese, it was evident that she was still more unable to protect the poor and neglected buffer States of Manchuria,—either from the Chinese bandits that overran them, and even menaced the frontiers of Russia; or from the Russians themselves. Manchuria was, in short, what the robber Turkoman States of Khiva, Kokand, and Bokhara had been until a quarter of a century ago—ripe for invasion.

If we eliminate, therefore, for a moment our own interested, though possibly very just point of view, and endeavour to regard the matter dispassionately with Russian eyes, it must be evident that Manchuria stood in need of reform; that no European Power but Russia could possibly open up North Manchuria by land; that no other Power but Russia abuts on North Manchuria, or has any possible claim on the ground of self-protection to occupy it; that the Chinese have hitherto neglected to accord to Russians their bare treaty

rights in Manchuria ; that it is manifestly desirable to open up and restore social order in Manchuria ; that Russia is the sole owner of the Pacific coasts of Manchuria ; and, finally, that she has already, at enormous sacrifices, brought her railway from Europe to the very gates of Manchuria. By our treaties with China we have, on the other hand, the right to travel and trade in all the Manchurian provinces just as we have in China proper. We were the first to explore Manchuria. Of all European nations we have far the largest share of the sea trade with South Manchuria ;\* but it must at the same time be remembered that there is also a considerable sea-going trade in seaweed and fish wares between this latter region and Vladivostock, so that the Russians have some sea rights too to vindicate.

Thus we have a clear issue. So long as Russia does not attempt to deprive us of our (up to this date largely nominal) right of travelling and trading in the two North Manchurian provinces ; so long as she does not attempt to establish preferential rights of her own ; so long as she does not attempt to similarly prejudice our trade with South Manchuria, and to interfere† with the Chinese customs collectorate there under our efficient and cosmopolitan control, manifestly it cannot but be for our advantage, and for the advantage of all nations, that Russia should have a free hand in the opening up of Manchuria by means of railways.

It may be argued that the Russians have already attempted to prejudice our North Manchuria trade by inserting a clause to the effect that their imports and exports shall only pay two-thirds of the sea-going rates ; and certainly this is the thin end of the wedge : but it must be remembered that Russian overland exports to Tientsin had already enjoyed this privilege under former treaties, so that the matter is not so serious but that it may perhaps be adjusted by conciliatory diplomacy. It must not be forgotten, too, that France has preferential overland tariffs on the Tonquin frontier ; and if I am not mistaken, we in Burma tax the Chinese frontier trade in a special way also ; so that upon this point we cannot proceed to condemn without deliberation and caution. What we have a right to demand is that the duties leviable at the

\* The Japanese and Americans now rank with us.

† She is interfering.

Russo-Chinese port of Ta-lien Wan in no way favour Russian trade or any other trade at our expense ; that Russian trade at the military port of Port Arthur be not surreptitiously conceded to or appropriated by Russians on better terms than to or by ourselves ; and that no attempt be made by Russia to circumscribe the movements of our missionaries and traders in any part of Manchuria, so long as it remains Chinese territory. It appears that already passports are necessary to enable any person to land at Port Arthur or Ta-lien Wan ;—a most illiberal policy at the outset. There is no doubt that Russia, who knows well her own inability to compete with us in enterprise, will try to jostle us out of our rights in all these particulars. Small blame to her. It is for us to stand up boldly in defence of our rights.

Any stipulations giving to Russian subjects a monopoly of mining or other concessions in North Manchuria would seem to be a clear breach of our treaty with China. There is nothing to prevent the Chinese from declining to give any specific concession to any particular individual ; which negative course has the same practical effect ; is less offensive, and breaks no treaty : but here, again, it must be remembered that railway concessionists for long lines in the United States, Canada, and even in Russia, have usually received very special privileges. In any case, we cannot well prevent it ; our only remedy is to secure compensation ; and we should be very careful to defend any concessions or interests already ours ; such, for instance, as the management of the Shan-hai Kwan railway, connecting Tientsin with Mukden, which I believe is in the hands of a British engineer, whom the Russians, it appears, have persistently endeavoured to oust.\* The Germans in Shan Tung, and the French in the South, imitating Russia, have tried, apparently with some success, to establish similar spheres of influence. The *Hinterland*, or “spheres of influence” doctrine is quite a new one—what may be called a *fin-de-siècle* refinement : but, after all, our claim that the Inspector-General of Customs shall always be an Englishman so long as our trade is the largest, together with our stipulation that no part of the Yangtsze valley shall be suffered to fall under the control of a foreign Power

\* The Russians were “tough” on this matter up to 1902.



—these two concessions are really suspiciously like monopolies of influence dressed up in another external form. But they are of little use unless we are prepared to defend them by force. The fact is, in these days of rivalry and of national struggle for life, we cannot expect to have everything our own way. We must give and take, and above all we must keep our eyes open. Napoleon I. shocked the old school of military sticklers by revolutionizing their obsolete science of tactics and bowling them over in the field; in the same way the vigorous and not over-scrupulous intellects of the end of the nineteenth century are changing the face of diplomacy, which, it must be confessed, was gradually becoming milk-and-watery in its quality. There is no use our turning up the whites of our eyes, and groaning at the wickedness of mankind. If we do not (to use the American expression) want to “get left,” we must be on the alert; we must have our fist ready when another puts his fist in our face.\* We must be up-to-date, and we must be prepared to fight for our really vital interests if we do not want to be ultimately cut up like another China; for certainly no scruples would stand in the way of any Power. But we must first be quite clear what we want to fight for, and whether it is worth fighting for. Secondly, it is futile to growl and make ourselves disagreeable unless we are prepared to bite as well as growl. Better keep silent altogether.

Apart from the purely commercial and missionary question, there is that of the balance of power in the Far East, and notably that of naval preponderance. It was pretty evident whilst the Japanese war was going on that this question must soon become acute. It became still more manifest when the Shanghai newspapers about two years ago published the alleged Russo-Chinese Agreement concerning the Manchurian Railway and the proposed cession of Kiao Chou to Russia. But a year later the world was surprised one fine morning to see Germany installed in Kiao Chou instead of Russia. Within a few days of that momentous event, which was quite a new departure in international morality, Russia took temporary charge of Port Arthur and Ta-lien Wan. Prince Oukhtomsky distinctly tells us that

\* Mr. Joseph Chamberlain has well asserted this principle in diplomacy.



she was surprised by Germany's action, and did this against her own inclinations. Japan's occupation of Wei-hai Wei had still six months to run out, and no doubt her hands were somewhat tied by the fact that she was bound to leave it on receipt of her war indemnity, or to run the risk of losing the balance of her indemnity if she elected to remain by way of a tit-for-tat. That little difficulty has been turned for the moment by our undertaking, with Japanese approval, to occupy the place so long as the Russians occupy the Liao-tung peninsula ; and there can be little doubt that, unless we had done so, France or Germany, or even Russia, would have found a pretext for doing so in our stead. The first part of the double event (*i.e.* the payment of the balance and the change of occupancy) was arranged to come off on the 7th of May, and the Japanese are to leave on the 7th of June, by which date the hands of Japan must, of course, be freer. Meanwhile Russia has endeavoured to coax Japan out of her kennel by abandoning the comparatively meatless bone of Corea—for the moment only.\*

The question of naval bases has been copiously discussed by gallant admirals in the *Times*, and, of course, it is one for military and naval specialists to decide. I will, therefore, not presume to say more than that, as a mere "man in the street," I think, in view of the scant attention paid to our interests and remonstrances by Russia, we have done well in occupying that place, at least until we have time to look round us ; and that, having ourselves behaved with great frankness and loyalty to her, we have now ample cause to suspect both the value of her assurances and the purity of her motives. It requires no specialist to see that it must be better to have a friendly haven to run into than not to have one ; even if we leave it unfortified like we left Heligoland. We have certainly as much right to forcibly check Russia's commercial movements by sea as she has to forcibly interfere with our commercial freedom of movement in Manchuria, if it is to come to using forcible measures at all. Of course, I cannot venture to express, nor am I competent to express, any specific opinion upon what we may have failed to do or might have done at any stage ; but it must be plain to all

\* The future struggle for supremacy between Japan and Russia will probably be fought out in or around Corea.

from the official correspondence published, that we held out a frank and loyal hand to Russia, and approached the question in a conciliatory and friendly spirit.

It has always been the policy of the Chinese Government, and notably of the Manchu Government, to "set one Barbarian against the other," and there can be no possible doubt that, during the recent negotiations, her wily statesmen have hoped to succeed in setting Europeans by the ears, and then to wriggle themselves out of a tight place without risking their skins. China's past record proves conclusively that she can be depended on neither to keep a treaty as a friend nor to fight as an ally; and however much we may feel momentarily indignant at the aggressiveness of German or Russian action, it is absurd for Christian Powers to cut each other's throats for the sake of self-seeking Chinese mandarins who hate us all with equal intensity; for fatuous statesmen who veer with every breeze, and who are viewed by their own industrious people with suspicion and even contempt. No doubt the behaviour of Russia, France, and Germany in ejecting Japan encouraged in the Chinese mind a subsequent hope, first, that England or Russia would eject Germany, and secondly, that England and Japan or Germany would eject Russia in turn. The present apparent friendliness of China for England probably only means that for the moment China feels that England is less immediately dangerous to her than Russia, and that her customs revenue is a much safer asset in English hands than in Russian. She would look on with glee at a war between the Powers on her behalf, and give no thanks to the victor if she could avoid it. Her weak concessions to Germany and Russia would probably have been less readily made had she not felt sure that other Powers would at once intervene and pull the chestnuts out of the fire for her, instead of doing what they have done, *i.e.* secured similar concessions for themselves. In fact, China's guile has in this instance overstepped its calculations and run into its own noose; China is permanently saddled with no fewer than five mortgages, whilst, so far, the mortgagees seem disposed to settle their claims in consultation with each other, without consulting her any further at all.\*

\* As acme of foolishness, her statesmen at Peking after this united all Christendom, as well as Japan, against China in the "Boxer" war.

It is a wretched end for a great and ancient empire to come to, and the lessons it ought to teach us are that we must trust solely to our own strength and sagacity, and not to the pledged word or vaguely expressed intentions of foreign governments, if we are to maintain—I will not say our political and commercial position in the Far East—but our existence at all. China, *i.e.* the Manchu Government of China, has been in the first instance ruined by its own empty pretensions and want of defensive power to resist Japan; secondly, it has been betrayed by its friends who pretended to save it from Japan.

It was England, through General Gordon, that saved the Manchu dynasty from destruction 35 years ago; \* but China has shown little, if any, gratitude since that time; she now clutches convulsively at the friend who saved her once before, in the hope that that friend will do so again: but she has nothing to offer; neither soldiers who will fight, officials who will reform, nor a government which will stand fast by its own engagements to its allies. Under these circumstances, it is difficult to see what more we can do than has already been done; that is, watch every opportunity for protecting our own interests; back up our claims by a show of force, and the use of force, when we are clear what our just claims are; refrain from noisy denunciations, and still more from the dangerous game of bluff; and be fully prepared to strike hard when we clearly recognize danger, and are resolved to defend any particular interest. We may appear to have met with rebuffs, and to have failed here and there; but we are not omnipotent in the world. We have, at least, the consolation of having played fair ourselves; and, if we have been disconcerted by false cards played by those whom we trusted to abide by the rules of the game, at least we have cleared the air of all illusions, and now understand what we must expect from our adversaries. †

\* *I.e.* in 1863.

† These words apply also to what has since happened in Africa and China.

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## CHAPTER IV

## THE GERMAN SPHERE OF INFLUENCE IN CHINA

THE action of Germany in seizing Kiao Chou was at once recognized by many to be the death-blow to Chinese independence, and the Empire is now almost inevitably doomed to a gradual dissolution. This paper, however, has nothing to do with moral or political considerations: as the Chinese themselves say:—"That which exists not in reason may perhaps exist in fact." In indubitable fact the Germans have summarily planted themselves in the oldest and most sacred part of China; created a sphere of influence there; and intend to hold it (subject to such conflicting established rights as they cannot wear or whittle away) against all comers. The strong men of the earth, inspired to do likewise, are everywhere on the war-path; the weak ones are going to the wall; and those who will not prepare to join in the scramble and fight for their future livelihood must simply resign themselves to being human anvils instead of human hammers.

Any stick is good enough to thrash a dog with, and any pretext seems good enough nowadays to justify action against the unfortunate Chinese. Suffice it to say without further moralizing that the latest move of the Germans has been to establish temporary political influence on the headwaters of the River I, a navigable stream which communicates with the Grand Canal at two widely separate points. This action practically confirms the effective strategical occupation of the peninsula, for there is no stream west of the I which does not flow into either the Canal, the Yellow River, or the Gulf of Pechili, and which therefore is not beyond the sphere of the peninsula. Great Britain in occupying Wei-hai Wei, having explicitly abandoned all interference with, has thus implicitly recognized the German sphere, and the eastern half of Shan Tung province is now definitely "sealed to" Germany in fact as well as in principle. In asserting her railway rights in the direction of the capital Tsi-nan Fu, her next move in a westerly direction must inevitably bring her into close touch with Confucius's town of K'üfu, the Mecca of China, the



residence and burial-place of the seventy odd lineal descendants of the Sage, and the most ancient capital of China of which we have semi-historical cognizance, quite 2500 years before Confucius the First existed. Nothing could more profoundly move the Chinese imagination (as distinguished from the Manchu or dominating-class feeling) than the occupation of K'üfu by a foreign Power ; but on the other hand perhaps nothing could be more wholesome, or a more drastic antidote to the impenetrable fatuity of the Chinese nation, which has survived four or five nomad conquests, and thinks it can live down the European conquest in the same way.

The population of Shan Tung is now officially rated at about 36,000,000 or 37,000,000 souls ; but it is quite certain that until comparatively modern times the province seldom supported one-seventh of that number. Just before the death of Kublai Khan in 1294, there were 10,402,760 households in the whole of China ; and a century later the founder of the succeeding Chinese dynasty officially announced a population in 1391 of 56,774,568 souls, living in 10,684,435 households. Precisely what a "household" includes, and what it excludes, is uncertain ; but in 1651 the new Manchu dynasty discovered that it possessed 10,630,000 "taxable units," which I take to be practically identical with "households." The deduction is that, until the piping times of peace which, in Europe as well as in China, have in modern times so vastly increased the numbers of settled communities, the total population of the latter can rarely have exceeded 60,000,000 souls, the fair proportion of which for Shan Tung province would be about 5,000,000. Hence the grinding poverty of individuals to-day, and a struggle for life made infinitely keener by the after effects of the Taiping rebellion forty years ago ; by the silting-up of the Grand Canal ; and by the sudden change in the course of the Yellow River which took place in 1851, just as the said rebellion was breaking out. The "spirit" of the province is broken past retrieve, for all that native unaided energies can do.

The public revenue of Shan Tung, so far as it is possible to ascertain it, amounts to something between four and five million taels, which, at the present low silver rates, means the absurdly low figure of £500,000 or £600,000. Distributed over 36,000,000 people, this would give a taxation of about



threepence a head for each man, woman, or child ; or (allowing that the taxes actually wrung from the people average all round double what they nominally are), say, sixpence a head. Even this latter sum is not at all oppressive, notwithstanding that sixpence a day would be good labourers' pay almost anywhere in China ; and that, as I have myself frequently experienced, it is quite possible to feed well, if coarsely, on Chinese food for twopence a day. Hence it is plain that there must be something more than usually rotten in the administration of a province where one day's wages is the utmost that can be extracted *per annum* ("squeezes" included) from each individual. At present the revenue admittedly collected is about as follows :—

	Tael.
Land-tax (poll-tax and other merged <i>corvées</i> and charges included) . . . . .	2,800,000
Value of taxes in grain (chiefly millet sent to Peking) . . . . .	500,000
Native customs (at Chefoo ; and at Lin-tsing on the Grand Canal) . . . . .	180,000
Taxes of all kinds on salt (including <i>likin</i> ) . . . . .	300,000
Foreign customs (at Chefoo ; Kiao Chou not yet computed) . . . . .	425,000
<i>Likin</i> (excluding charges on salt and opium, and divided into sea, river-canal, and land <i>likin</i> ) . . . . .	125,000
Charges of all kinds on native opium (Sir R. Hart officially estimates at a potential Taels 600,000 !) . . . . .	75,000
Miscellaneous undefined, and subsidies from other provinces . . . . .	150,000
	<hr/>
Between £500,000 and £600,000 ; or Taels . . . . .	4,555,000

In all these matters there is ample room for reform. A few years ago it was officially reported that for land-tax purposes the tael (only worth 1200 to 1500 copper "cash") had been for years computed at 5600 to 5900. As to the taxes in grain, the "Viceroy in charge of Grain Transport" has been denounced, with all his host, as a complete failure for many years past : the young Emperor went so far as to abolish him altogether ; it was even proposed to get rid of the whole grain system ; but the Dowager-Empress has knocked this and other important reforms summarily on the head. This Grain Viceroy has his headquarters at Ts'ing-kiang on the Grand Canal, but within the so-called British sphere, and (with his colleague close by, the Manchu Customs Commissioner at Hwai-an), forms one of the greatest obstacles to free circulation and trade. The native customs, wretchedly managed though they are, produce double what they did five years ago, when the excellent Governor Li Ping-hêng

instituted his reforms. Though a conservative and wooden-headed official, and unfortunately not in favour with the Germans, Li Ping-hêng\* is an honest man, and was by no means guiltily responsible for the murderous attacks upon German missionaries within his province. The Germans made a false move in insisting upon his disgrace, and, as honest men are comparatively rare in China, they ought to repair the error, or at least to lie passive under its repair. On the other hand, Liu Ping-chang (the British degradee), who is a bad man, seems to be coming into favour again, and should be suppressed.† As to the salt revenue, the £50,000 raised from the source covers, not only the supply of 36,000,000 people in the province itself, but that of at least 4,000,000 others occupying the old bed of the Yellow River in the northern parts of Ho Nan, An Hwei, and Kiang Su provinces. In other words, one million shillings are paid by 40,000,000 people, *i.e.* each individual pays in taxes about a farthing a year (including all squeezes) for his salt, over and above the price‡ of the salt itself. It is evident that the Germans can do a great deal in the way of reform here, especially as the southern half of the salines (at Kiao Chou and Jih Chou) have already been within their effective occupation. At present "river *likin*" is levied on the salt at five places, and of course most of the receipts under this head are peculated.

As to foreign customs, there can be no great improvement upon the administration of Sir Robert Hart; but if the Kiao Chou trade gains real life, the new customs branch established there ought to produce something considerable, especially in taxes upon foreign opium. Chinese steamers already run from Chefoo to Lai-chou Fu on the north coast, with the western part of which district there is communication by canal from Kiao Chou. This canal was begun by Kublai Khan in 1280. It will be noticed that the duties on foreign trade at one single port, and that port (Chefoo) at the remotest and most mountainous corner of the province, produce as much revenue as the whole of the salt trade (including parts of other provinces) and the whole of the general *likin* put together!

Notwithstanding the misery it causes, not to mention the

\* Perished during the "Boxer" troubles.

† He was, in fact, shortly after this suppressed. ‡ Raised since the "Boxer" wars.

utter disorganization of trade, *likin* only produces half a farthing *per capita per annum* ! There could not be more eloquent testimony than this to the incapacity, corruption, and hopeless conservatism of mandarin government. If the Germans were to appropriate the native customs, opium, salt, and *likin* offices at once ; hand over 1,200,000 taels to the Chinese Government instead of the 600,000 now yielded ; and, after paying their own expenses of management, expend the balance in public works for the benefit of the province ; not only would this initial outlay of £150,000 be more than liberal compensation to the Chinese Government for the shock to its nerves, but it would be a mere trifle out of pocket compared with the Germans' own expenses on the single port of Kiao Chou ; moreover the profits obtainable for the benefit of the province would after two or three years be enormous ; trade would be facilitated, and would flow into new channels ; the people would be relieved from irritating delays and indefensible squeezes ; the German exchequer would have no difficulty in recouping itself ; and the whole world, in short, would be benefited.

But though money is thus to be made out of Shan Tung, that province also has its vested responsibilities. In the first place, 90,000 taels a year at least (if not more) have to be paid towards the interest on and amortization of foreign loans ; and about 230,000 taels a year towards the support of the three Manchurian provinces. These two items entitle England and Russia to a "moral and intellectual" voice in the matter of local finance. The following is a revised list of annual expenditures up to date \* :—

	Taels.
Remittances of all kinds in cash to Peking . . . . .	982,000
"      "      " in grain      " (money value) . . . . .	500,000
"      "      " in cash for Manchuria . . . . .	230,000
"      "      " in aid of other provinces, customs pay, arsenals, etc. . . . .	242,000
"      "      " in aid of Yellow River conservation . . . . .	672,000
Unexplained (local administration, etc.) . . . . .	1,319,000
Local army . . . . .	700,000
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	4,645,000
Repayment of loans . . . . .	90,000
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	4,735,000

\* Since the "Boxer" troubles, 900,000 taels must be added on account of the war indemnities.

From an administrative point of view, Shan Tung is divided into ten prefectures of the first class, each prefecture having from seven to seventeen districts subordinate to it. There are two prefectures of the second class, each with three districts. Thus there are 117 districts in the whole province. To clearly understand what this means, it must be recollected that the province is as extensive as the whole realm of France ; each prefecture is as large and as populous as the once so-called provinces (Burgundy, Picardy, etc.) of France ; and each district is as large as a modern French department, and possesses a walled city for its capital. In other words, the task of taking over the administration of a single populous Chinese province would not be inferior in magnitude to the task of incorporating the whole of an average European monarchy.

The following are the civil salaries of the chief Shan Tung officials, as given in the Red Book :—

	Tael.
Viceroy in charge of Yellow River (abolished in 1902) . . . . .	3,000
Governor of the Province . . . . .	15,000
Grand Examiner (Education) . . . . .	4,000
Provincial Treasurer } (these two are the real <i>working</i> governors)	8,000
Provincial Judge }	6,099
Grain Commissioner . . . . .	4,000
Salt Commissioner . . . . .	2,000
Total, specifically enumerated . . . . .	42,099
Say twelve prefects at 3000 } in charge of . . . . .	36,000
Say 120 magistrates at 1500 } towns and . . . . .	180,000
Say 500 smaller fry at 500 } markets . . . . .	250,000
Add for clerks, deputies, officials not in charge of towns, staff-officers, etc.	500,000
	1,008,099

It will readily be seen that there is no difficulty in accounting roughly for the 1,300,000 unexplained expenditure on civil administration : to reduce the above sums roughly to sterling, it will be necessary in each instance to divide by eight. On the other hand, "squeezes," perquisites, and other dark matters probably have the reverse effect of turning the above tael estimates once more into the same numbers of sterling pounds. The first duty of good German administration would therefore be to redress the balance between nominal taels, credited to the public chest, and actual sterling

wrung from the people for the benefit of a thousand rapacious officials, from the highest down to the police.

The "army" of Shan Tung appears to cost about 700,000 taels a year, and in its present condition it is a completely negligible quantity, as can readily be guessed from the way in which the "trained" troops behaved when a handful of Germans seized Kiao Chou. Such as it is, however, it is at the present moment in process of reconstruction, so that in any case it would be unprofitable to attempt precise definitions. Previous to the Taiping rebellion there used to be about 20,000 men, of which total 2000 were Manchus, and 18,000 Chinese; but even if any of these "regulars" have more than a nominal existence, all effective military service has, since the Taiping rebellion, been done by hired "braves," who, by reason of their readiness to leave their families and fight, receive much higher pay than the effete garrison soldiers staying idly at home. The gradual result has been, on the one hand, that braves have in part filled up the permanent soldier billets, whilst, on the other hand, the braves have themselves lost what little fighting capacity they ever had, and have degenerated into mere "soldiers." Notwithstanding this waste and incapacity, there are (besides the Governor, who is also titular General for the province) three brigade-generals, and a perfect army of colonels, majors, captains, lieutenants, sergeants, etc., dotted over the province in charge of squads, companies, or batteries at the various cities and market towns, where they are supposed to perform police or guard duty. Nearly every single one of these officers is both a peculator and an ignoramus, regarding his post from a purely mercenary point of view. Of course it would be an excellent thing if the jealousies of the Powers would subside so far as to give Germany a free hand to deal with this wretched state of affairs; and it would also be an excellent thing if Germany could be persuaded to do this for the advantage of the Chinese Government; or at least for the good of the province, without seeking to turn her successes into a political engine for her own exclusive advantage. *Nous verrons.* Meanwhile she is beginning with a nucleus at Kiao Chou.

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China, though in many senses one of the oldest organized States, is singularly deficient in archæological remains. In fact, Shan Tung is about the only province in which antique remains of any note still exist. The most important of these lie about ten miles south of Kia-siang city, which is not far west of Confucius's town above described, except that it is on the other side of the Grand Canal ; whole sepulchral chambers still remain intact, together with numerous bas-reliefs carved on stone, with cartouches, depicting and explaining incidents in the Chinese wars with the Scythians, such as are plainly recorded in history. One of the most interesting of the antiquities is a stone illustrating the alleged visit of Confucius to the semi-historical philosopher Lao-tsz. The date assigned to these stone monuments is A.D. 147. There are some more of a slightly earlier date in Fei-ch'êng city, to the north of Confucius's town. These sculptures are chiefly remarkable in that they dispose of the notion which prevailed, until M. Chavannes\* paid a visit to them, that China had derived all her ideas of architectural and glyptic art from India and Buddhism.

There is still another remarkable "antiquity of modern date" in Shan Tung, and that is the tomb of the Sultan of Sulu, the *paduca* Pahala, who visited Peking in 1417, and died at a place called Têh Chou on the Grand Canal during his journey home. He was buried outside the north gate of the city, and from that day to this succeeding governments have allowed a small annual sum for the up-keep of his tomb. In 1727 the Sultan Mahomet Balaruddin sent a mission to the Manchu court to inquire if everything was still in order. Têh Chou being one of the two Manchu garrisons, the Emperor was easily able to ascertain the truth in a confidential way, and it transpired that the deceased king's sons, who had been left behind in 1417 to perform annual sacrifice, had married locally, and had founded two naturalized families. It is possible that the Taiping rebellion may have done damage to this interesting tomb ; but, at any rate, what with the Palace, Temple, and Cemetery of Confucius ; the much more ancient shrine of the Duke of Chou, the grave of Mencius, the stone antiquities, and the Sulu grave, there is

\* Author of an excellent work on Chinese art.

plenty of pabulum in the province for German archæologists : in fact, there is no saying what treasures future Schliemanns may not unearth by systematic excavations.

One of the first things the Germans ought to take in hand is the improvement of river communications. As we all know, Li Hung-chang\* has just sent in his report upon the Yellow River, expressing his opinion that no permanent cure for its vagaries can be hoped for without considerable outlay on the one hand, and expert foreign assistance on the other. Long before the time of Confucius, the Chinese Emperors were perpetually shifting their capitals (in modern Ho Nan, Shan Si, and Chih Li provinces) on account of the mad freaks of "China's Sorrow." From B.C. 600 to the beginning of the Christian era it entered the sea near Tientsin ; and then for a thousand years it ran, as it does now, past Li-tsin city, in the northern part of the German sphere, into the Gulf of Chih Li. From 1034 to 1851 the course was through what is called the northern Hwai territory to An-tung. When it took the last plunge north, it came within an ace of destroying the provincial metropolis of Tsi-nan. Since that date it has cost about a million sterling a year in hard cash, apart from the sad destruction of life and property caused every few years by fresh outbreaks. In 1711 the Jesuits made a thorough survey of its course, and their map is published in Du Halde's *Memoirs*. In 1868 the late Mr. Ney Elias made a thorough examination of the lower bed at his own expense, and in 1872 I accompanied him to the official residence of Li Hung-chang at Tientsin, in order to lay before the then new viceroy a scheme for deepening the "scour," and straightening the channel. At the present moment a great part of the south-western part of Shan Tung is a vast marsh, and so also is the north-eastern portion of Ho Nan, in consequence of this river's capricious action.

Another watercourse the Germans ought to take in hand without loss of time is the Kiao-Lai River or rivers, that is, the two rivers of Kiao Chou (running south) and Lai-chou Fu (running north), which in rainy weather are naturally connected at their headwaters by the same system of rills or

\* Since deceased (Nov. 7, 1901).

sources. As I have stated, in 1280 Kublai Khan endeavoured to make this junction a navigable one by canalization, and succeeding dynasties have from time to time tinkered at the same work, which, however, has never got beyond the stage of affording passage to small boats. Both from a military and a commercial point of view, the thorough opening of this passage between the Yellow Sea and the Gulf of Chih Li is of the highest strategical importance; moreover the northern branch of the joint canal-river communicates by a navigable tributary with the celebrated P'ing-tu gold and coal mines.

The fishing industry could not be in more competent hands than it now is: in this, as in market-gardening, anything a Chinaman does not know is scarcely worth knowing. The Chefoo oyster is as good as any in the world, whilst the vinegar-zoophyte has the wonderful property of turning fresh water into vinegar. The sea-slugs so esteemed by Chinese gastronomers are common enough on the rocks; also crabs, shrimps, and prawns; but, strange to say, no craw-fish or lobsters. Herring, mackerel, bream, eels, and "bottle-fish" are both cheap and good: the natives even eat the jelly-fish, which, being poisonous, Europeans are disposed to "pass." The Chinese are great adepts in the art of fattening gold-fish and carp, with which the Shan Tung lakes and rivers swarm; there are even fresh-water oysters, crabs, and shrimps, and also a kind of edible snake.

The provincial capital of Tsi-nan Fu is a very clean city of 250,000 inhabitants, surrounded by two fine walls of granite, well supplied with excellent well water, and also by a running stream called the Loh, the waters of which are carried through the city in conduits laid under well-paved streets, and gather themselves together beyond the city to join the Yellow River five miles away. There are no manufactures or wholesale trades; but the whole town has, according to missionary accounts, a busy, prosperous, and gay appearance, in the quiet sense of an English cathedral town; and it possesses a lake and garden promenades for pleasure-seekers. Fishing in this lake is free, though it is Government property; but there is a close season, both for frogs and fish. As in most of the northern towns of China, the Mussulman

population is numerous, mostly employed, here as elsewhere, as inn-keepers, carters, cow-keepers, and butchers. The original Roman Catholic Mission is Franciscan, and counts about 1500 converts: this is the so-called Eastern Shan Tung Mission, chiefly French, and particularly strong at Ts'ing-chou Fu near the Wei Hien\* coal-mines: it has European priests stationed in two other first-class cities. The Chinese are now drilling a new corps of 2000 braves for the protection of Wei Hien. Bishop Anzer's mission, the only genuine German Catholic mission in China, has its centre at Ts'ao-chou Fu in the marshy west, and it is here the prelate himself was beaten just before the missionaries Nies and Heule were murdered: the scene of the massacre was not far from the spot where the stone antiquities, mentioned above, are to be found. The Protestants have innumerable missions all over the province, the American Presbyterians and Baptists numbering fifty ladies and gentlemen established in ten cities; the English Baptists, Gospel, Zenana, and China Inland together coming a good second, if, indeed, they do not outnumber the Americans. The S.P.G. and Church of England both have missions; and there are Swedish Baptists and Danish Lutherans; so that in ecclesiastical and ghostly as well as in commercial and material matters, the Chinese are well looked after. But, quite apart from religion, all missionary influence in China has a purifying effect upon the undisciplined natives, and this fact deserves more generous recognition than is usually given.

The sportsman is particularly well off in Shan Tung. Foxes swarm; and in the absence of any one to hunt them, the Chinese entrap them for their skins. There are frequent opportunities of "potting" at wolves, but the wild boar (so common in Kiang Su) is not found: nor do there seem to be any tigers, bears, or leopards: in fact, the province is too densely populated for such wild animals to find adequate scope. But there are hares and rabbits still left. It is in birds rather than quadrupeds that the sportsman will chiefly revel, and in China there are no game-laws: a man may shoot what he will, where he will, and at all seasons. Pheasants and partridges, ducks, pigeons, snipe, and wood-

\* The German railway now reaches to Wei Hien.

cock are as common "as blackberries" (which, by the way, are totally unknown), and there is a sort of bustard which moves in immense flocks to and from Manchuria with the frosts. Wild geese and wild turkeys are there, but hard to get at; and there is said to be a wild swan which in flocks accompanies the bustards and ducks in their migrations. Snakes are common in this as in all provinces, and several kinds (notably the black adder) are poisonous. Lizards, toads, centipedes, scorpions, wasps, and bees, all very much as around Peking. Locusts frequently cause great damage, and often seriously exercise the wits of the authorities to cope with them: the Chinese eat the larvæ. The recently discovered art of smearing decoy locusts with plague virus might be successful in German hands. Butterfly collectors will have a good time here. There are two distinct kinds of silkworm, the mulberry-eater in the south-west, and the oak-eater in the north-east: the latter produces the well-known "pongee" (*i.e.* *pên-sê* or undyed) silk, the great local market for which is Ch'ang-yih, between the two rival coal-mines, on the River Wei.

Cultivation is carried as far up the mountains as things will grow, and above that there is little to be seen except stunted pine trees: probably the barren aspect of the hills is the result of reckless deforestation carried on persistently for centuries. This, indeed, is a characteristic of all thickly populated Chinese provinces. Travellers in Shan Tung report that here, as elsewhere, each village has its shady tree for the benefit of wayfarers, and cemeteries are not deprived of their cypresses: otherwise there is much bareness. The oak-eating silkworm also feeds on the varnish tree (a stinking variety of the *ailanthus*, which is also valuable for medicinal purposes). The mahogany tree looks very like it, and is in fact styled "fragrant *ailanthus*" by the Chinese, who eat its young shoots, and distil an eye-salve from its fruit. The other common trees are the ubiquitous bamboo, the willow (including the weeping variety), the *sophora* (usually called by Europeans the ash), and a kind of *catalpa*. The commonest fruit-tree is the persimmon, almost indistinguishable in appearance from a tomato, but tasting like a fig: dried persimmons are exported in vast quantities, and resemble



"Normandy pippins" in flavour. Another fruit known to trade is the *zizyphus*, erroneously styled "date" by most foreigners. The wood of both the above trees is used for many ingenious purposes. Crab-apples are good, especially when candied, and the Chinese decoct a very good cooling summer drink from them. Ordinary apples and pears, peaches, apricots, etc., are tasteless, but the Protestant missionaries at Chefoo have for many years past done good service in cultivating and ameliorating the breed: they have also been successful in improving the native wild grape, and have even introduced strawberries, gooseberries, and currants. In flowers and ferns Shan Tung is particularly strong: the lilies of the valley are very beautiful in June, and later on a second variety (without odour) is cultivated for its dye.

Chinese rulers have always been fitful in the matter of wine or spirit, forbidding its manufacture in times of scarcity; denouncing it as a wasteful luxury in times of public humiliation; and taxing it cruelly in times of financial tightness.\* The "yellow wine," made from millet, is by no means bad: it tastes something like "corked" sherry (and water). The ordinary *samshu*, or "whisky," distilled from the *sorghum* or Barbados millet, is excellent, especially when drunk piping hot. Opium is grown in many districts, probably to the extent of 10,000 chests a year at least; but of course it is far inferior in quality to foreign opium, and even to that obtained from South-west China. Two kinds of tobacco are cultivated, and here the Germans, who have already gained practical experience in Sumatra, might do a great deal, especially in matters of airing and drying, to improve the flavour of the leaf. There is a large export of sauce made from the soy bean, which is one of the winter crops raised in Shan Tung as in most Chinese provinces; as this sauce is already largely exported to Europe—if, indeed, it does not form the basis of our own renowned relishes—there is a considerable field here for the German speculator. From these or an analogous variety of beans the well-known "bean-cake" is manufactured, the refuse liquid being used for lighting lamps, caulking seams, and mixing cement. Last but not least, comes the enormous production of bean-curd or

\* Especially so since the "Boxer" troubles.

"Chinese cream-cheese," a cooling relish very largely consumed with the otherwise insipid rice. For cooking purposes pea-nut and castor oil are used; but it must be remembered that the latter, when boiled, loses the efficacy for which it is notorious medicinally in Europe. There is little or no rice grown in Shan Tung, at least in the eastern parts; wheat, red millet (*setaria*), and *sorghum* are the chief serials, supplemented by pulse, cabbages, egg-plant, onions of all kinds, yams, taros, edible caltrops, squashes innumerable, melons, and pea-nuts. As is well known, the Chinese are not "nice" about their manures: if they were, their sanitary condition would be worse than it is; for all middens being "free," and there being a steady demand for refuse matter of all kinds, the bottling up of noxious airs is reduced to a minimum in towns; the ground has speedily returned to it the gases taken out of it for food; and the soil has no difficulty in yielding alternately two and three crops during the course of a year. Owing to the absence of anything deserving the name of roads, in the eastern or mountainous half of the province there are no adequate means for conveying surplus stock away: even in the western or low-lying parts, where most of the opium is grown, the Yellow River has recently destroyed such roads as there were. Hence the very first duty of the Germans is to open good broad highway roads available for cart traffic. Until this first essential step is taken, Shan Tung must always remain a miserably poor province, for without exchanges of surplus there can be no general prosperity.

As already mentioned, the Germans are well aware of the coal capacities of P'ing-tu (which district has water communication with their new port) and Wei Hien, which latter would have to send its produce to the northern coast of the province. The gold-mines at the former place were in 1883 provided with excellent machinery and worked under foreign superintendence for a few years; but gradually *chinoiseries* crept in, and at present the valuable machinery is lying idle: the same thing may be said of some other gold-mines, to the south-east of Chefoo, which some American-Chinese speculators started about ten years ago. There is plenty of mineral wealth in the province;—coal, iron, galena, gold, quicksilver, and copper in abundance. Some of these mines

have been nibbled at in a half-hearted sort of way by the recent governors of the province, but nothing can ever really succeed unless it be under European management; the Chinese are jobbers almost to a man where the public pelf is concerned. Asbestos is a speciality of the provincial capital, where there is quite a little trade in furnaces constructed out of this airy material.

The Rev. A. G. Jones of the Ts'ing-chou English Baptist Mission, who has an extensive knowledge of the people, has recently entered into a very exhaustive study of the reasons for the extreme poverty of Shan Tung. Taking a low estimate of the official figures, in order not to overstate his case, he places the population at a minimum of 30,000,000, and the total area (three-fourths cultivated) at 41,500,000 English acres. He gives detailed reasons for supposing that only one quarter of this total remains uncultivated; and, various allowances and deductions made, he shows that  $1\frac{1}{5}$  English acres are the utmost that can be allotted on the average to each inhabitant. The system of tillage followed gives three crops of grain (coarse red millet and wheat) every two years; and by an elaborate but sound calculation Mr. Jones shows that, when sufficient is allowed for the food of beasts, for seed, and for other crops (apart from the winter vegetables, etc.) displacing food products, there cannot possibly remain more than  $11\frac{1}{4}$  bushels of serials per head, of which 8 bushels are either coarse millet or beans. The total "wealth" taken annually out of the ground is shown by the same close reasoning to be about £1 sterling *per capita per annum*; and as, even if all this were spent on food, the  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 lbs. a day purchasable would be insufficient, according to European standards, for the bare purpose of adequately carbonizing the oxygen breathed, it follows that the purchasing power of Shan Tung, so far as foreign goods are concerned, must in some way or other be economies on the already insufficient total of £30,000,000; and, as I have shown, the Government takes about £500,000 of this (apart from squeezes).

But this is not all: the average rent on the land is 9 per cent., against 3 per cent. in Western Europe: money raised on land costs 20 per cent., against 4 per cent. or 5 per cent. in Europe. The average yield of wheat per acre is only 12 bushels, against

28 in England. When to all these disadvantages we add the absence of roads, the utter unacquaintance with economic laws, the total ignorance and maimed condition of women ;—in a word the general incapacity of mind to triumph over matter ; and the absence of moral courage ; we see in a measure how it is that the whole province is sunk in a slough of sullen despond. Absence of security for accumulated gains, want of confidence in each other's pecuniary integrity, adulteration of products, want of a fixed currency—all these together tend to make industrial combination or commerce in bulk well-nigh impossible. The spectacle of helpless incompetency is so depressing that we ought to welcome any honest effort of the Germans to shake up and instil life into this particular limb of the poor moribund corpse. With their capacity for organization, their thorough-going scientific methods, their discipline, physical vitality and energy, the Germans really have a splendid field for the exercise of their best powers. They may exploit the Chinese of Shan Tung in a grinding selfish way as the Dutch do the helpless inhabitants of Java : that is, they may give them security for life and property, measure out their tasks and their gains for them, keep them in ignorance as an inferior race, use the surplus profits for the benefit of the mother country, and endeavour to persuade themselves that the people who crouch down before them like slaves are happier than they ever were before. There are many defenders of the Dutch system, which I have myself studied in Java and Sumatra ; but it is not one which would ever appeal to the sympathies of the great body of Englishmen. On the other hand, the Germans might begin by opening up good main roads ; then storing water for times of drought, securing stable and fair relations between landlord and tenant, abolishing the curse of *likin* stations, prohibiting the cultivation of the poppy except under official control, fixing the land-tax, cheapening justice and making it equal for all classes, facilitating exchanges, encouraging industrial activity by means of loans at nominal interest, and so on :—in short, doing what we do in India. It is true that some, more especially Dutchmen and Germans, disapprove of the English system in India, with its equality, its liberty, and its official tolerance : they think the “ natives ” are not ripe for

it, abuse it, and are lacking in respect. However that may be, if the Germans set about reforming Shan Tung with the honest general desire to improve the condition of the inhabitants, and to further the interests of general trade on a basis of equality ; if they preserve to the ruling dynasty its suzerain rights, and endeavour to shake off the spirit of martinetism and official arrogance which is so prominent a feature in the Fatherland itself, it is hardly possible but what they must within a very few years completely transform the face of Confucius' ancient land ; and no Power ought to view such efforts with jealousy : indeed, events are likely to force them to do likewise, or try to do it, in their own "spheres."

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## CHAPTER V

### ANGLO-RUSSIAN RELATIONS

IT would be an agreeable reflection if, after all the material achievements of the nineteenth century, we could only embark upon the twentieth with the full hope of being able to reconcile our aims with those of Russia. Both in Europe and in the Far East, populations have increased to an extent unheard of in past times, and it is therefore inevitable that there should be more competition for the good things of life. Improved means of communication have increased our knowledge of one another, and created a number of artificial interests, keeping the nerves and the imagination in a state of tension unknown to the times when men had nothing to think about but their daily bread and their immediate surroundings. The interchanges of thought and commerce tend on the one hand to create sympathy, whilst the struggles between capital and labour, coupled with the new competition for race control, have a corresponding tendency to engender hostile feeling. We are, in fact, taking new plunges into the Great Unknown, and it behoves us not to get too rashly beyond our depth.

During the century just ended, the populations of the British and Russian Empires have increased *pari passu*, and



it is therefore justifiable to assume that the efforts which have thus led to identical results are the best efforts which those responsible for peace and order were respectively capable of making, and the ones which in good faith they considered the most suitable. It is unreasonable for us to rail at each other solely on the ground that we endeavour to reach the common end of prosperity by different means; and it is more to the point to try and arrange so that each striver, in the employment of his own means, shall not come into collision with the other.

The origin and conception of Russian life is essentially different from what we are fond of calling the Anglo-Saxon notion. Our existence has, almost from the beginning, been bound up with the idea of personal and individual liberty. We took possession of Celtic soil, and founded petty kingdoms, in which the power of the ruler always took a moderate place. For a time the Danes and the Frenchified Scandinavians called Normans succeeded in reducing the Anglo-Saxon and some of the Celtic populations to a condition of partial serfdom; and they might have done so completely, had not the subject populations sided alternately with the lords against the King, and with the King against the lords; until they had got rid of the overweening power of both, and firmly established the principles of political liberty and of equality before the law. The King obtains his supplies by grant from independent commoners, none of whom need be beholden to his grace, or fear his displeasure. The lords have one or two unimportant privileges left, but their own numbers are periodically recruited from such commoners as may have shown sufficient energy to accumulate the necessary wealth or influence; so that practically any Englishman who has it in him may make his own terms; and the peers are simply the successful classes, forming a useful brake or conservative force, the general necessity for which, in spite of abuses here and there, the body of the people have the good sense to see. For efficiency's sake, certain of the public services, such as the Navy, Army, Customs, and Judiciary body, must be removed from immediate popular control; but no one ever talks of "His Majesty's Lord Mayor," or "His Majesty's Member of Parliament." We began our history as

a free people, and we have always kept our rulers within respectful bounds. Our officials are our servants, and we retain in our hands the right to insist upon being properly served.

But the Russian view is radically quite different. They, too, have had their Scandinavian conquerors, with whose triumphs the connected history of Russia begins. So far from asserting their liberties, the republics of Kiev and Novgorod welcomed the protection of their Varangian lords and masters. It is just nine hundred years since Vladimir, who was almost as great a man as Peter seven centuries later, fitted out his rude subjects once for all with a religion: he would take no orders from a foreign Pope; nor advice from a wandering race like the Jews; nor would he forswear liquor like the Mussulmans. After due consideration, he decided for the Greek religion, which his people at once accepted on the ground that "it must be good, because the King and the boyars say so." Thus, from the beginning, we see that the Russian people have required a shepherd, and have obeyed like sheep. But they had to fight for their existence, as hunters, trappers, and fishers, with the various tribes of Turkish race (gradually driven west from the Chinese frontiers), as well as with the Danes and Teutons; and the anarchy which prevailed after this consequently rendered the Russians an easy prey to the Mongol invaders, under whose supremacy they next remained for over two centuries. It was not until the time of Ivan the Great (1500) that the Tartar yoke was cast off, and that Russia was reunited, more compactly than ever before, under one hand: as this masterful sovereign claimed from his own family the right to "give Russia to whom he should think proper," it goes without saying that the popular voice was not much consulted in minor matters; and he was the first to openly declare himself "Autocrat of all the Russias." Ever since then, the course of modern history shows us that it is to the force of character of her rulers, to the concentration of intelligence in one or two metropolitan cities, rather than to the spread of individual energy and independence amongst the masses, that Russia owes her agriculture, her power, and prosperity. In the one case—that of England—the initial force has always lain in the popular

units, each man freely utilizing his own energy as he listed, and the masses appointing rulers as servants of the State ; claiming and asserting equality before the law, and regarding the executive as the mere mouthpiece or instrument of the popular will. In the other—that of Russia—the spark of activity and intelligence, possessing sufficient inherent force to animate the helpless and ignorant masses with economic power and corporate motion, has always been in the ruler, which word includes the limited circle of lieutenants and advisers around him ; who are not his peers, but his instruments. Both systems have, after 900 years' trial, succeeded up to a certain point, and it is therefore only natural that the controllers of each system should endeavour to perfect themselves upon beaten and familiar lines. It is as difficult—to take an instance—for us to engraft upon our military system the conscription which comes so naturally to the Russians, as it is for them to engraft upon their municipal system the liberties which come so naturally to Englishmen. It is as unreasonable for either to regard with hatred an unfamiliar means to common ends, as it would be for us to assail with obloquy the American style of winning a horse race or a trotting match, simply because the jockey sits, or the driver holds the reins, in a fashion which has not hitherto commended itself to us.

Any person, of any shade, colour, nation, occupation, politics, or religion, may enter Great Britain at any point, without passport or question. He may go where he likes, do what he likes, enjoy the same privileges as a native, and go away when he chooses. The exceptions to this broad statement are so technical and special that they need not be mentioned. Liberty is absolute. On the contrary, no one, not even a native, can enter Russia at any point without a passport and personal examination ; moreover, the passport must have been *visé* by a Russian official at the place the bearer started from, or at some other place on the way. He may, once inside Russia, go where he likes ; but, the instant he sets foot in a house or hotel, his arrival must be reported to the police, and his papers shown. He cannot obtain his registered letters without being “legitimized ;” that is, the landlord or host must specially certify that the person is

really the one his passport states him to be. So long as he is within Russia, and behaves himself in a harmless way, he may move freely from place to place on condition of reporting his whereabouts every night he changes his sleeping-place. When (after travel inland) he desires to leave the country, he must allow three days for inquiry ; and, his movements having been chronicled, he is traced back step by step ; care being taken that all debts have been paid in every place visited. Thus it will be at once seen that complete control over every individual in the Empire is the essential key-note of the Russian system, whilst the exact contrary is the essential key-note of our system ; to wit, the total and absolute ignoring of individuals, and all record of their movements. This difference inevitably involves entirely opposing ways of viewing the official body. In our case, every man does what he likes : if he applies to the policeman or the Secretary of State for assistance, in either event those functionaries are at his disposal, or refuse at their peril. In the Russian case the autocrat is sole proprietor of the State, and his officers are the channels through which permission to share the State benefits are bestowed upon individuals. When I was in Russia I was several times peremptorily ordered to take my hat off, in banks and such places, because they were in some way "imperiallly" affected. In entering one of the Moscow gates I had my hat knocked off by a cab-driver because I did not remove it ; at the time I was unaware that the "icon" over the gate was holy, and imagined that the principle involved was that the wall was a sort of quarter-deck which I ought to salute. Various other little incidents of this kind occurred to me, all tending to show that the personal rights of individuals, though liberal enough during "good behaviour," were strictly subordinate to the principle of "grant" and authority. No man possessed inherent rights, or could swagger about like a lord of creation, asserting them as we do "adversely" against all comers, including the King. On the other hand, no reasonable personal rights possessed at home by ourselves were withheld, so long as they were recognized as derived from the grace of the Czar. Of course there are certain specific exceptions for natives, such as "orthodoxy" in opinion, religious and political ; but these specific



exceptions are inherent in the difference between the Russian system and ours ; as also is the unfavourable position of the Jews. A man can, generally speaking, rise when he likes, eat when he likes, dress as he likes, blaspheme, get drunk, squabble ; and, in short, act with as much freedom as ourselves, so long as he does not commit treason (so to speak) against the essence of government, which is the maintenance of order as a whole and individually, *i.e.* the peace of the public streets, the external uniformity and submissiveness of behaviour in the individual. Practically a man of unambitious temperament—a Christian at least—is as free in Russia as in England, where to an educated Russian the want of external respect for “ authority ” seems sometimes to savour of licence, insolence, and “ caddishness,” if not blackguardism. The only essential difference is the insignificant one, or the enormous one (according to standpoint), that in the one case a man is perfectly free, and in the other he is not.

Far be it from me to insist that all our notions are the best, and all the Russian views mistaken ; but I would submit that Judaism, Roman Catholicism, and Protestantism have found it possible to live together in England with a harmony quite impossible a century ago. Why should not that be possible in politics which is possible in religion ? The crux of the question lies, not in the alleged duplicity or ambition of either side, but in the apparent incompatibility of systems, which can, in truth, never be reconciled unless reasonable concessions be made, or mentally reserved, by either party.

The absolute liberty and equality of the English system enables us to secure the best energies of each man's own voluntary choice, not only without the impulsion of authority, but in a measure despite authority, which, from the very reasons for its creation, is compelled to act rather as a brake on energy than as a spur to energy. Without in any way censuring the system under which the Russian individuality has grown, it is impossible to deny that there is not the same energy, the same self-confidence, the same resourcefulness in the common Russian unit that there is in the American, English, Irish, or Scotch. Moreover, even if those qualities were there, the system does not permit of their free development on English lines. Hence, a degree of protection is



indispensable in order to get the human infant set up firm upon his legs. With the advantages that "Britishers" possess in the shape of general instruction, hereditary freedom, inexhaustible capital, marine supremacy, and a naturally combative disposition, what chance would submissive Russians have of success were Manchuria thrown open to free competition, when handicapped by colossal ignorance, lack of initiative, subordination to uniformity, dearth of capital, and constitutional docility? And if experiments were, nevertheless, made in Manchuria, how exclude Siberia, Russia, and Poland? In many respects we have ourselves been left behind by the bold resourcefulness of the Americans, the superior training and discipline of the Germans; but we are at least free to fight, each man as he best may, with weapons of our own choice, and thus to challenge the items of supremacy temporarily lost by our own carelessness. The recuperative power of freedom is endless, because the force is inherent in each individual; nothing but the will is required in order to bring it into action. The rival power of protection is also very great up to a certain point; but, when a weakling has been set firmly on his legs, it is only natural to expect that he will not desire to resign for others' benefit, or to modify the factitious power that is in him: hence the guiding power which started him insists on regulating too. Russian capacity may be compared to the new Russian sugar system; production is encouraged and limited at the same instant. Fair prices secure the industry from loss, and consumers from fluctuation; but at times a certain quantity of surplus sugar must run waste in the shape of exports abroad at a low figure. If too much freedom were granted to a successful Russian who had been "set on his legs," it would only be natural that he should, where his interests should require it, enter into foreign partnership, engage foreign foremen, purchase foreign machinery, and form foreign combinations, all hostile to the main Russian principle of control. The managers of the co-operative scheme say: "No! what we create we regulate." It is really nothing more than the Dutch cultivator system as applied to the Javans; it is "tyranny," or "fatherly care," according to what our mental training is.

Americans, Canadians, and Australians have thought fit in their own interests to check the Chinese advance : why should it then be so monstrous for Russians to place shackles upon a British advance not easy to reconcile with their political system ?

British merchants (except by free individual choice) will not consent to regulate their movements under passport ; stand hat-in-hand waiting official pleasure ; have their correspondence and telegrams watched ; and undergo many other disabilities familiar to Russian social life. How is it possible for strangers to insist on privileges which no Russian subject can share ? Admitting the right of every country to govern itself in its own way, how can we for a moment expect Russia to accept instruction from us ? In some countries, like the United States, Switzerland, or Scandinavia, the Government works freely without the faintest interference from any Church body, except such as any group of interested persons may exercise, on any grounds whatever, be they religious, commercial, or social ; and on each question's own merits. In other countries, such as Austria and Portugal, the civil power is hampered by the interference of a foreign hierarchy. In Germany, England, Belgium, Spain, Italy, etc., various devices have secured a *modus vivendi* of a mixed nature. But in Russia the control over men's minds and bodies has been perfected with a uniformity which has never been known in the previous history of the world. It is like the gigantic "trusts" with which ultra-free America is now experimenting. On the other hand, never in the whole history of the world has there been let loose such a gigantic decentralized force as the liberties of Great Britain and America. It is by no means certain that we are right, and the Russians wrong : each nation creates its own standards : naturally each one of us free men approves his own free system, which the majority of educated Russians—at least of the official class—profess to abhor. Naturally also the ruling Russians are satisfied with their methods, which, to the majority of us, are (on hearsay grounds) abhorrent : with my own eyes I have seen much good in them. They imagine terrible injustices in connection with the Irish, the Boers, and India. We, on the other hand, read alarming stories about the Finns,

the Nihilists, and the Turkomans. But the broad facts remain, namely, that each of the two greatest "world-powers" that have ever existed has developed within 900 years under Norman impulse from a few tribes, the one into a land empire and the other into a sea empire, together covering nearly half the world's surface ; and the main question is: Can they exist harmoniously together, or must they fight to a finish until one or the other system prevail ?

Having travelled in nearly all the countries of Europe, in Russia I certainly derived the impression that in few was the administration, however imperfect, more assiduous in promoting the welfare of the people ; in none was the material to work upon less responsive and promising. It is impossible to deny, however, that in commerce, shipping, manufactures, science, and even popular instruction, a great advance has recently been made. It is equally impossible to deny that Russian expansion has regenerated the fanatical hotbed of Central Asia. On the other hand, in spite of our own successes, where is there so much waste, squalor, and dejecting misery as in wealthy England ? We may possess many superior qualities to account for our power, but I suspect if we eliminated the one redeeming virtue of freedom, we should not have much general superiority to show. We have not the brightness and sobriety of the Italians or Spaniards ; the intelligence and thrift of the French, or the discipline and order of the Germans. It always appeared to me that the Russians, man for man, excelled us in sympathy and humanity. I take it that we have succeeded, as a nation, without exactly knowing how or why, by this one powerful quality of freedom, which happens to have taken wholesome root among us ; and that, as rulers of other people, we have gained confidence through the innate love of fair play and "letting be," which seems to form part and parcel of our particular conception of freedom. The Russians appear to possess undefined qualities, of some other sort, which enable them to deal with other races almost, if not quite, as successfully as ourselves ; and, as to their own people, if they are dissatisfied with their lot, it is for them to work out their own salvation, if they are strong enough and worthy enough ; or to remain what they are in the contrary event. It is no business of ours. In any

case, the peoples of the Russian and British Empires scarcely anywhere come into personal contact at all ; it is only through their Governments and their Press that they can, even indirectly, "close" with each other. Such as we are, we have both to exist together in the world, whether we like the rivalry or not ; and it appears to me that the prospects of success and peace will be the better for both of us if we patiently endeavour to understand each other's aims and requirements ; make frank allowances for each other's special circumstances and difficulties ; and refrain from attitudes of hostility and censoriousness, in small things as well as great, until we have carefully looked round each question and established the true issues :—What we want ; what they want ; and in what way our respective aims can best be reconciled, the one with the other. As men, I do not believe the Russians are either better or worse than we are ourselves ; and I have often thought that such good natural qualities as we possess are also possessed by the Russians in a degree which ought to make us sympathize with them strongly.

## BOOK IX

### *THE SEAMY SIDE*

#### CHAPTER I

##### CHINESE PUNISHMENTS

THE seamy side of Chinese life sometimes had its fascinations for me, and accordingly on one occasion a party of us resolved to assist at an orgy of blood—in other words, at an execution of criminals. The place of execution varies in different towns. In Canton it is literally a potters' field, outside the Tartar, but inside the Chinese walls, the criminals being forced to kneel down in a narrow space, one side of which is bounded by a stagnant ditch running through the pottery quarter, and the other by rows of potters' stalls. The idea evidently is to perform the gruesome work on a spot where it is not easy for dangerous crowds to congregate ; the alternative of being pushed into green slime or tumbled amongst fragile earthenware, with only a narrow avenue for escape into the arms of the police at either end, is not an inviting one for the larrikins and the evil-disposed. At Kiungchow the executions took place entirely outside the city walls, upon the Champ de Mars, or drill-ground, of which there is usually one in or near every central town. At Peking the autumn executions, as they are called, are carried out about the middle of the Chinese "winter moon," or eleventh month, at a place called the "Entrance to the Vegetable Market," about one mile outside the "Easy Government Gate" of the Inner or Tartar city, in the middle of the main street which runs thence through the Outer or Chinese city. The Autumn Revision precedes the executions, and at this revision the



Emperor ticks off, or "hooks off," as it is termed, a number of those offenders whose crime presents "solid circumstances" of proof, allowing the remainder to stand over. If a criminal is fortunate enough to pass three such ordeals without being "hooked off," he may consider himself reprieved, and he either languishes in gaol, is exiled, or is banished with or without hard labour; or he may even in time bribe himself free. It is a Peking autumn execution that I am about to describe; minor special executions may take place on the same spot at any time.

At an early hour upon the appointed day the traffic is stopped, and a space sufficient for the purpose is barred off, no one but Government officials in uniform being allowed within the ropes; "foreigners," *i.e.* Europeans or Americans, are (or were then) easily able to obtain admittance, the more so that the majority of them are themselves either Chinese customs officials or officers attached to the various legations. So used to this have the Chinese at Peking become, that the official term *lao-ye*, or "old sire," is usually applied there, by both natives and foreigners, to missionaries as well as to officials; in fact, like the Hindustani *sâhib*, to all whites. On one side of the road a booth or mat shed had been erected for the execution commissioners. In this booth were a number of very shabby tables and stools, backed and armed chairs being comparatively uncommon in the north of China. On the tables were the regulation inkstands, rests for brush-pencils, paper, vermilion, and other official writing materials. The stools were gradually occupied by twenty or thirty mandarins in full dress, each with a blue, crystal, or opaque white "button," according to his rank. These so-called "buttons" or globes are about one inch in diameter, and are worn (with or without a feather or squirrel tail, as a special or further mark of honour) upon the crown of the official cap; official understrappers and mandarins of very low rank wear a brass or so-called "gold" button. These buttons are essentially a Manchu innovation, dating from 1643, having been, like the "pigtail," unknown to orthodox Chinese attire. As each mandarin took his place, those who were already seated rose with a smirk to greet the new-comer, who, on his part, deprecatingly implored them not to do him so much

undeserved honour. In another mat shed, on the opposite side of the street, were the wretched prisoners, twelve men and two women, all huddling together for warmth: they had been brought during the night from the hideous prison commonly known to Europeans as the "Board of Punishments"—the same in which Sir Harry Parkes and Sir H. Loch were confined thirty-five years ago.\* Each prisoner had a bamboo pin stuck into the coat collar, and attached to this pin was a slip of paper inscribed with the prisoner's name, crime, and the nature of the penalty—decapitation or strangulation—to be undergone. Decapitation is considered a much more disgraceful death than strangulation, for whilst in the latter case the whole spirit presents itself for admittance to the "shady regions," in the former the guardians of Chinese purgatory raise awkward interpellations as to what has become of the head; yet strangulation is infinitely the more painful death of the two, as will shortly be seen. The list of prisoners in this case included a murderer each from Hu Pêh, An Hwei, and Kwei Chou provinces; a man who had stolen Imperial garments from a royal rest-house in Chêh Kiang province (stealing from public buildings is a very much graver matter than an ordinary theft); and four men convicted of stealing or receiving rice from the granaries of Yün Nan province. All these were to be decapitated. Amongst the strangled were a man from Kiang Su province, who had been caught plundering coffins—the Cantonese call such offenders "mountain dogs;" an old man from the same province, who had in some way caused the death of another person—very little, if any, allowance for accident is made in Chinese law, which rather favours the *lex talionis*; a seal forger from Shan Tung province; a man from Chih Li province, who had beaten another to death; and three thieves from Shan Si province. It is not a capital offence to steal ordinary objects, unless the value exceeds Taels 105, say £20,† a sum which compares favourably in point of common sense with the historical English five shillings. It is popularly stated that substitutes can be bought for Taels 50, and most certainly this statement is more than true, so far as the price of human life is concerned; but it is quite another question whether

\* Written in 1896.

† Now nearer £15.

the gaolers and judges can always be bribed. A Chinese magistrate—a very good fellow, who saved my life in a row—once told me in almost as many words that he could always arrange to starve or murder any prisoner in gaol if he found it expedient to get rid of them in that way: his predecessor was a regular trafficker in human lives, and the official servants used to tell me all kinds of categorical stories which quite convinced me that an unscrupulous executive mandarin can practically do what he likes so long as he manages to keep to windward of legal forms, and avoids giving personal offence to his superiors. There is a third form of capital punishment called “piecemeal hacking,” which is performed upon women who poison or otherwise murder their husbands (usually by running a stiff bristle into the navel whilst asleep); individuals of either sex who cause the death of a parent or senior agnate; traitors, etc. I never saw this performed, but I once saw a snap-shot photograph of a man at Canton upon whom it had been executed.\* Almost invariably the executioners allow the victim to stupefy himself or herself with opium: the breasts are first sliced off, then the flesh at the eyebrows, then the calves, muscles of the arm, etc., until at last a dagger is plunged into the heart, which is crammed into the mouth of the corpse. Many Europeans, and most Chinese officials, deny that this cruel punishment is ever carried out; but, as I have said, I possess the photograph, and the Viceroy was so angry about it that the British Steamer Company had, in their own interests, to remove the engineer who took it.

In the present instance all the prisoners presented a most woebegone and haggard appearance, as indeed poor wretches who have been some time in a Chinese gaol invariably do. Yet even this indignation-rousing treatment of prisoners has a reasonable defence; the scale of Chinese life is so low, the common people, who often live like and literally with pigs, spend their days in such a villainous state of dirt and—from our point of view—misery, that there is no way of physically punishing an individual unless you starve and “torture” him, so as to make him less comfortable than he is when he is “enjoying himself” in private misery. None of the prisoners

\* I succeeded in 1901 in obtaining a copy the day before the negative was destroyed.

displayed the slightest fear or emotion ; those who had tobacco-pipes smoked them, and those who had not were quite willing to accept contributions of cigars and food, like so many monkeys in a cage, or to crack jokes with the bystanders. The Chinese have no fear whatever of death ; that is, no Chinese will ever hesitate to travel in a rickety boat, walk across a shooting butts, drink stagnant water, live amidst plague, small-pox, or cholera, sail down a dangerous rapid, or go down quietly with a sinking steamer when it appears clear that no means of escape are provided. It is difficult, therefore, to understand what they run away from in war, or why they will never individually stand up to a square pugilistic encounter. The fact is,<sup>s</sup> the national mind has evolved itself into a state which abhors a *situation nette* of any sort ; in diplomacy, as in war, it prefers tortuous evasive courses, and invariably collapses before a display of force or a *fait accompli* ; the same thing in most departments of everyday life ; commerce, however, is an exception.

Whilst the officials in the shed were awaiting the arrival of the Imperial commissioner, the "satellites," or police, vigorously plied their scourges upon the rowdy crowd, which largely consisted of roughs and loafers, who had borrowed old official hats for the occasion. In front of the official booth were five yataghans, or executioners' swords, about three feet long by three inches deep, with handles of carved wood representing the Imperial dragon, griffin, or other monstrosity. Perhaps yataghan is hardly so suitable a word as butcher's knife, for the inner curve appeared to have been caused by length of use rather than by original art ; all were very ancient in appearance, as they grimly stood in a framework protected from the weather by a tiny mat house. Meanwhile the executioners, wearing yellow cotton aprons, were exchanging pipes and chaff with the crowd, or preparing baskets of bread with which to soak up the blood ; sometimes these chunks are sold and eaten in order to "give courage" to the purchaser. In the case of very desperate criminals the heart and liver or lungs (I forget which) are usually—if they can be got at—torn out, and sold for a very high price, in order to literally "put heart" into the craven. When I was in Sz Ch'wan, some twelve years later, two men



once suddenly rushed into the kitchen of the inn, hastily grabbed a frying-pan, threw something into it, and after a short frizzling commenced to eat it ; my writer, who had seen it, told me it was the heart or liver of a celebrated highway-man who had just been tortured to death ; these were two of the "satellites." Such events are frequently described in Chinese history ; in fact, "eat his flesh and sleep on his skin" is a regular literary expression for "revenge." To resume. The one-storeyed houses in the neighbourhood were covered with joyous unofficial spectators, all struggling to get a good view ; but I think we Europeans, as we stalked unmolested through the crowd, were as much the centre of attraction as the executions ; it was only eight years \* since the allied troops had entered Peking, and we "foreign devils" came in for our full share of the reflected glory earned by Tommy Atkins and Johnny Crapaud. At that time a single foreigner with a stick could scatter a crowd of Chinese, armed or unarmed, like a flock of sheep. None of the prisoners knew whether or not they were actually doomed to execution, for, in accordance with an old custom started by one of the Han dynasty emperors 2000 years ago, the Emperor has to sign three separate decrees at short intervals on the morning of the execution in order to escape the risk of precipitately causing the death of an innocent or hardly used man, as once happened to the ancient Emperor in question. At about eleven o'clock a "movement" was apparent ; two rows of satellites, wielding bamboo bludgeons, cleared the course for the Imperial commissioners, whilst others drove back the crowd with their scourges. The procession was headed by a cavalier, wearing on his cap a long crystal button, elaborately mounted in gold, and thus, by its unusual shape, signifying that he had just come from the Emperor's presence ; his horse was led for him, as he carried aloft with both hands the Emperor's final warrant wrapped up in yellow silk. Dismounting before the official shed, he placed this packet with an air of extreme veneration upon the central table, and was duly bowed to his appointed seat. Next came a couple of ordinary Peking seatless carts, two-wheeled affairs something like a covered Lancashire market-

\* Then 1869.



cart, but smaller, and constructed almost exactly on the principle of those in use 2000 years ago, as exhibited upon the ancient sculptures recently discovered in Shan Tung province. In the first cart sat or squatted a handsome old mandarin of the third (blue button) rank, and in the second the commissioner himself, with a coral button, the highest of all ranks except those reserved to the Imperial family ; all the rest stood up as he descended solemnly from his cart and entered the booth. So many splendid costumes in a row presented a very striking sight ; the robes were usually of brown or blue silk, trimmed with ermine, and topped with expensive fur capes. After the commissioner had taken his seat and motioned to the others to follow his example, he opened the yellow packet, took out the decree, and, observing which names had been "hooked" by the Emperor with the vermilion brush, called them out one by one ; this was the first intimation he or any one else had of his Majesty's selections. An underling ran off to the prisoners' booth as soon as the first name was called, and shouted it out. The unhappy victim, with his hands tied behind his back, was summarily hustled into the street in front of the commissioner to be formally identified. The next step was to draw a piece of chalk across the back of his neck, in order to mark the exact vertebral spot where the knife ought to go. The crowd and the police yelled and cheered lustily as the man was dragged, at a wave from the commissioner's hand, into the middle of the road and forced upon his knees. The executioner took from his breast a yard or two of very excellent twine, having the appearance of stout whip-cord, and deftly placed it like a bit between the prisoner's lips ; the cord was then passed behind the head, and brought back tightly over the eyes, whence again the two ends were fetched round the occiput to meet in front of the face. One assistant pressed the wretched criminal's back down, whilst a second hauled violently at the two ends of the cord until it sank almost invisible into the folds of the skin, and a third arranged the position of the neck so as to afford the other two more purchase. The executioner now took up one of the knives. Advancing with the utmost coolness, he made careful aim at the chalk line with his right hand ; he then raised the sword,

and grasping the handle with his left hand, too, as it was suspended in the air, brought it down fair upon the chalk mark. The head was cut clean off at one blow, and then swung into the air for a second by the assistant who held the ends of the cord, amidst shouts of "*Hao, hao!*" (well done!) from the crowd. Meanwhile the body lay gushing with blood like a palpitating fire-hose, and a basket of bread was thrust under the aperture of the neck to catch it as it came. The head was carried before the mandarins to be identified and marked off in the register, after which it was cast down by the side of the body. It had now assumed a dull terra-cotta colour, but still moved or twitched convulsively. A piece of paper was last of all fixed to the corpse's hands, as evidence of his identity, whilst similar preparations to those described were made for the second victim. The executioner, who went about his business as quietly as though he was trimming a bale of cotton, plunged his knife into a pail of hot water, wiped it clean, and sheathed it, from first to last without moving a muscle of his face, or even looking up. All this took place within an area of four square yards, as the crowd was allowed to press right up to the *dramatis personæ*, merely having a care to keep clear of the executioner's elbows. Both crowd and executioners were sprinkled with blood, which they simply swept off with their sleeve-cuffs—used also for wiping the nose on a winter's morning. The commissioner, who was there in order to see, could not see at all, and it would have been quite easy, supposing the crowd were in the plot, to substitute another man for the real criminal. A silence "so profound that you could have heard the maggots in a cheese moving" (as a witty Frenchman present said), reigned whilst the pinioning and chopping went on; but so indifferent were the feelings of the Chinese, that many of them kept handling our clothes and eyeing our strange faces, even at the instant the knife was descending, puffing their pipes as stolidly as though it was a cock-fight or a rat-baiting exhibition. Even the prisoners displayed no sign of awe, nervousness, or other emotion, except that weary haggardness inseparable from cold, hunger, and general physical misery. As each prisoner was finished off in the same way, the crowd smoked, laughed, joked, paid compliments, and

bowed, just as though they were at a crowded garden-party, sometimes casually looking on, at others chatting indifferently and examining us. They say that eels grow used to skinning; and certainly it was the case with me, that the absolutely unsympathetic attitude of the crowd and the victims worked so rapid an effect upon my mind, that the mingled curiosity and awe I felt, when the signal for the first decapitation was given, faded away in ten minutes (during which short space of time I saw six heads chopped off) into a feeling of boredom and indifference, just as though so many pigs were being stuck. When human beings value their own lives at so low a figure, it can hardly be expected that outsiders will appraise them at a higher value. The executioners seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves, and the opportunity of displaying their prowess as *matadores*; in fact, their calm, self-satisfied bearing was exactly that of the pampered popular idols of the Spanish bull-ring. In no instance were two cuts necessary; but in one case the knife fell slantingly, cleft part of the skull, and scattered the brains about. One prisoner was allowed the honour of a mat to kneel on, and another mat was decently thrown over his corpse; no doubt a perquisite would have to be paid to the executioners for this show of delicacy.

The strangling operation is even more revolting than the decapitation. Up to the point of being forced down upon the knees in the middle of the street, the procedure was exactly the same as with the decapitation cases, the victim being trussed up for all the world like a fowl ready for the jack, his shins, thighs, and back forming three tightly adjacent parallel lines, the total height of all not exceeding one foot. Two strands of cord were used instead of one in the strangling cases, doubtless on account of the immense strain upon it caused by the lever or tourniquet used. The cords, which bound up the man's body so that no movement of any description, except bodily rolling over, was possible, were connected with a double cord round the throat; a short stick was so placed behind the man's neck and back that when twisted it drew the whole system of lashings exceedingly taut, including that round the throat, which quite disappeared into the skin. Four men united to hold the poor fellow still

and work the tourniquet apparatus, which was kept going for at least five minutes, we spectators, meanwhile, crowding round so closely that there was not a square yard of space for the executioners and prisoner together to move in ; the crowd reeled behind and before us, and it was as much as we could do to keep ourselves from falling upon the expiring wretch. When the executioners were satisfied that he was dead, he was rolled over on his face, which, by this time, had turned quite blue, and was gushing with blood from both eyes and nostrils.

The two women were subsequently strangled also ; but, indifferent though I had grown to the stolid sufferings of Chinese men, I did not care to witness the slow, deliberate, and cold-blooded slaughter of females. Nor did I witness the "decapitation of the dead." One prisoner was lying dead in his coffin, and already in an advanced stage of decomposition ; but in exceptionally grave criminal cases Chinese vengeance is not to be thus balked by death, and the head of the offender is taken off all the same. Quite half of the total number of Chinese prisoners die of misery in gaol, apart from any deliberate arrangement to murder them or let them starve. Others eagerly seize any opportunity offering for committing suicide, and then there is an end of them, unless a striking example is intended to be made, in which case they are executed just the same—occasionally even taken out of the grave to undergo decapitation, so that the devil (or his equivalent) may have his full due when they appear before him. The Panthay Sultan, who swallowed poison in 1874, before he surrendered Ta-li Fu to the Imperialist General Ts'ên Yüh-ying (the supposed prompter of Margary's assassination), was thus executed after his death.\* All this may be very silly and horrible, but we must remember what we ourselves did with Oliver Cromwell's remains ; that, within living memory, we hanged a man for five shillings ; and that no Chinese tortures ever exceeded in cowardly baseness those inflicted all over Europe three centuries ago in the name of religion. The vengeance of the Chinese Emperor even goes beyond the grave. I distinctly remember his issuing the following order about eighteen years ago :—"The grace of our

\* Prince Hassan, his son, gave me an account of his career in 1901.



ancestors, in sanctioning the principle of metempsychosis in the persons of Tibetan infants acclaimed as spiritual successors to priests, has hitherto favoured the finding of souls in the bodies of the X—— family : X—— Y—— having been found guilty of treason, we hereby command that in future no souls shall be discovered in the bodies of X—— infants for at least three generations.” Depriving a dead man and his parents of all honours in the next world is also a frequent occurrence.

At Canton the bodies of criminals who have been executed are cast upon a patch of waste ground near the lepers' village outside the town, and are there left for the dogs and crows to feast upon. There is, however, nothing more shocking in this than in the Parsee practice, which I have seen, and any one may witness, under the British flag, at Bombay, of feeding the vultures with human corpses ; or than in the Tibetan and Mongol practice, frequently described by travellers, and may be witnessed at Lhasa and Urga, of pitching one's father or mother upon a dung-heap for the dogs to eat in the public streets. All “ horrors,” and most virtues, are largely a matter of prejudice and convention ; and any one who, like the present writer, has been round the world half a dozen times, and visited most countries, will probably arrive at the conclusion that human beings should be sparing of their censures upon each other, patient with supposed faults, and tolerant of everything which to strangers conscientiously seems right. But, to return to our subject, in Peking the bodies of executed criminals (in cases where the relatives are unable or unwilling to bribe the police to give them up) are cast into a pit of about the capacity of a British coal-shaft, but not so deep as to hide the corpses below from the view ; this is outside one of the city gates, and is called the *Wan-jên-k'êng*, or “ Myriad man-hole.” Swarms of rats soon devour the flesh ; they are of enormous size, and have become so fierce through always being left undisturbed, that the people believe they have “ eyes of fire ” ; certainly a live man would stand a poor chance if he fell down that hole. The heads of decapitated offenders are suspended for a few days near the place of execution, or, if the offence is very grave, are taken back to the city nearest the spot where the crime was committed. The most serious offence of all, after treasonable designs upon the Emperor's



person, is the causing of a parent's death. So horrible is this considered, even when done by pure accident, that slicing is the invariable and minimum result. To avoid the graver consequences, which nominally include severe punishment of many other members of the family, degradation of the local authorities, and even razing of the city walls\* (I once actually saw such a razed city in Sz Ch'wan province), the mandarins invariably discover that the offender was stark mad; he is quartered none the less; but others escape.

Pirates are often put to death very cruelly. Once, at Shanghai, I read in a native Chinese paper one Sunday morning that the magistrate was killing a man publicly by inches in this way. The wretch was suspended in a cage, so that the tips of his big toes rested on two bricks; his neck was fixed in the wooden top, so that if he rested his toes the pressure was transferred to his throat. It was expected that the "fun" would begin on the Monday, when people were to be allowed to pelt him with rotten eggs, etc. I at once translated a full description, as related, as though I had seen it, and asked the editor of the chief English paper to put it in on Monday morning. The effect was quite startling. A meeting of treaty consuls was proposed, with protests from the Powers to the Chinese Government, and I do not know what not. I lay low, enjoying my own "fun" all to myself. Public feeling ran so high that the man was not only not tortured to death, but respited, and, I believe, subsequently reprieved.

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## CHAPTER II

### INFANTICIDE IN CHINA

THERE are few subjects connected with Chinese social life which have attracted more attention than infanticide, and it may, therefore, be worth while to adopt, so far as possible, a historical form of treatment, and trace the practice back to

\* King Peter of Servia was to raze the Konak for similar reasons.

its roots. There is nothing in the classics or in the earlier histories of China to show that any such custom existed in ancient times; existed, that is to say, in a greater measure than it does in all countries under the sun. The first authentic mention of it is in a private letter from the celebrated poet, Su Tung-po, who was contemporary with our William the Conqueror. Owing to court intrigues, he was exiled to various provinces in the South, but his chief claim to the admiration of posterity is based upon the services he rendered to the island of Hainan. His temple and library are still maintained at great expense, and I often used to visit them during my two years' residence in that island. On his way southwards, the poet had to pass through the great lake district of Central China, and he there observed (as he wrote to his friend) that "between the mouth of the lake and the town of Hankow, the fixed custom of the peasants in that tract of country is to rear two male and one female offspring, killing the surplus, and particularly girls. The practice is to drown them in cold water, directly after birth; and, as the parents often feel qualms, they do it with their eyes closed or backs turned, simply holding the infant down in the basin until death puts an end to its gurglings." Dr. Edkins, formerly of Peking, has found records of female foundling hospitals two centuries subsequent to this. According to evidence published by Père Hoang, under the authority of Bishop Garnier, an author of the purely Chinese Ming dynasty which succeeded the Mongols and preceded the present Manchus, in a book upon local customs plainly testifies to a practice then existing in South Fuh Kien—that is, in the region called Zaitun by Marco Polo—of rearing only one girl in each family, and drowning the rest. A district governor under the same dynasty found it necessary to issue proclamations prohibiting the practice of drowning girls in the Chu-ki department of Chêh Kiang, a little to the south of Hangchow—Marco Polo's Kinsai. The authority quoted—which lies upon my desk as I write this—also cites a proclamation prohibiting the drowning of girls in the region south of Foochow. The document states that both rich and poor are addicted to the custom.

Coming now to the present Manchu dynasty, I find that in the year 1673 the second emperor issued an edict prohibiting

the abandonment of poor children in the neighbourhood of Peking. From the language used, it appears that the practice was common among the Manchus as well as the Chinese, but there is strong reason to believe that this was not female infanticide as we now find it: in 1659 the first emperor, on the proposition of a censor, had already forbidden the practice of drowning girls in Kiang Si, Kiang Nan, and Fuh Kien provinces, besides expressing a fear that the evil custom must also exist elsewhere: if it had existed at Peking, he would have said so. In 1772 the Provincial Judge of Kiang Si recommended to the fourth emperor that the law punishing the wilful murder of sons and grandsons with sixty blows and a year's banishment should be applied to parents drowning their children. In the year 1816 the fifth emperor again declared that "something must be done;" from which we may conclude that, even if the proposal of 1772 had been adopted in practice, the results had been far from satisfactory. In 1825 and 1827, according to the same native Catholic authority, proclamations were issued in the neighbourhood of Hangchow and Hankow, severely prohibiting the drowning of young girls. Thus, we see that, ever since the date of our Conquest, there is a chain of evidence pointing to Hu Pêh, Kiang Nan, Chêh Kiang, and Fuh Kien as being the provinces where female infanticide has been most prevalent.

The above being the well-substantiated early history of infanticide, it now remains to bring forward contemporary evidence. In the month of October, 1877, I published in the Foochow newspapers a full translation of a long proclamation denouncing the local practice of drowning newly-born female children, and calling upon the gentry to report the names of such midwives as could be shown to have aided and abetted the unnatural parents. (It must be explained that male physicians do not assist in China at the birth of children.) Alongside of this document was printed a translation of the eight regulations governing the Infant Preservation Charity, the sole object of which was to prevent the drowning of newly-born girls. There were at that date four "girl-drowning bureaux," in different quarters of the city; parents intending to drown their daughters were invited to take them to one of these offices, when the parents might either place

the infants in the hands of official nurses, or, if found deserving, receive a pittance for the children's support. These documents are extremely long, but I have them before me at this moment. Outside the city of Foochow, on the way to the favourite mountain summer resort called Ku-shan, there is a small pond, like a horse-pond, under the shadow of a large banyan tree; at the foot of the tree was a stone, engraved with the words, "Girls may not be drowned here." I have no doubt the stone is there still, but I saw it in the year 1877, and I see that other persons saw it as recently as 1884. Just at this time a missionary lady named Miss Fielde was instituting careful inquiries in the neighbourhood, and a year later she published the results in a local serial, entitled "Woman's Work in China." Of the women she questioned, there were twenty-one Foochow mothers "who had murdered, sold, or given away forty-six daughters." I made the acquaintance at Wênchow, in 1883, of an official whose father had been Literary Chancellor at Foochow, where he distinguished himself by his crusade against infanticide; the brother of this chancellor married the daughter of the notorious Commissioner Yeh, whom the British carried off to Calcutta. I was presented with a copy of the "Life of the Grand Secretary P'êng" (for to that rank the father subsequently attained), and in this "Life" were given full details concerning the prevalence of infanticide in Fuh Kien. The law of 1772 is there quoted, as indeed it usually is in public proclamations; but, so far as I can ascertain, it appears to be a dead letter.

I turn now to the more southerly parts of Fuh Kien province. About twenty-five years ago Mr. George Hughes, one of the British Commissioners of Customs in Chinese employ, then at Amoy, published the most specific details. He himself met a labourer with four babies slung in baskets, two at each end of a pole, on the way to the market. Mr. Hughes ascertained that girls would only fetch a few pence each, and, even then, solely at the foundling hospital. Boys brought over £3, if healthy and promising in appearance. A Chinese woman, known to Mr. Hughes, and then respectably married in Amoy, had been picked up as a baby by a missionary, who noticed from his boat an earthen jar from which cries

were proceeding. The boatmen had unconcernedly explained, in "pidgin-English," that it was "piecee smollo girlee." In 1843 the Rev. David Abeel made careful and conscientious estimates of the proportion of girls drowned in this same Amoy or Zaitun region, and it is singular to find that he specifically mentions as the worst place the identical city (T'ung-an) indicated by the Chinese authority I have quoted, several centuries back; so that we may feel quite safe in accepting the evidence as historical. And the number of female children destroyed after birth would seem from the ample statistics given by Mr. Abeel, to vary, according to town, from 25 to 75 per cent.: some parents admitted to having killed five girls. Since Mr. Abeel's time the Rev. W. McGregor, of Amoy, has made personal inquiry, and he also laid the results before Mr. Hughes. He did not find that T'ung-an was worse than any other part of South Fuh Kien. Moreover, even in rich families, it often happened that only one girl was saved alive. The poorer classes, especially the women, so far from making a secret of the practice, defended it, and the prohibitory proclamations were merely formal. Mr. Hughes found as a consequence that in those parts women were too scarce for every man to be able to marry, and that the state of family morality was, in consequence, very low, husbands having learned to regard the irregularities of their wives as a matter of course. I have also in my possession an original proclamation issued ten years ago by the Viceroy Pien of Foochow, in which the law of 1772 is quoted, and condign punishment of parents drowning their girls is threatened. I am now translating from a Chinese leading article which appeared in the native papers of September last (1897). It is stated therein that in Kiang Si province female infanticide is on the increase; that only well-to-do families will rear one or two girls; and that the poor will not even take the trouble to carry their babies to the foundling hospitals. The authorities of the provincial capital, in issuing prohibitory proclamations, explain the reasons usually given for making away with girls—poverty; cost of marrying them into another family; anxiety of the mother to have sons, and, by getting rid of the girl at once, to be in a condition for bringing forth and suckling a son all



the sooner. The proclamation is a very long one, and the prefect uses all his eloquence in order to prove the insufficiency of the above three reasons. But it is noticeable that, whilst vaguely threatening the penalties of the law, he does not cite any particular clause, and the whole document has rather the ring of perfunctoriness than of earnestness; so far, at least, as any intention to inflict serious punishment goes.

Kiang Si and Kiang Su may be said to represent the province which used to be called Kiang Nan, and as to which we have seen that there is evidence of infanticide many centuries old. Some years ago I printed two notes in the English papers published in China, having special reference to Kiang Su. One called attention to a statement in the *Peking Gazette* to the effect that in and around Yangchow—the city of which Marco Polo was governor for a time—infant girls are often thrown into ditches for dogs and pigs to eat, and that a foundling hospital was being established there, to be supported by a slight extra tax upon salt. The other cited an official document emanating from the Viceroy and the Governor, jointly, stating to the Emperor that of late years infanticide had shown a tendency to extend even to males, and announcing that “there are now many hundred stations where relief is granted to lying-in women at the rate of 600 cash (2s.) a month, for six months; or for six years if the woman is widowed, and will not marry again. Clothes are provided for the infants, and 500 cash for immediate *accouchement* expenses.” Besides the above, there is the testimony of a proclamation issued by the Shanghai magistrate in 1872, and published in the *China Review*, denouncing the “abominable practice of drowning female children.”

There still remains Chêh Kiang, amongst the provinces concerning which we have evidence many centuries old. A few years ago I cut the following (translated) notice from a native newspaper:—“A vile custom which ought to be dealt with. Throughout the prefecture of T'ai-chou Fu (centre of the province) from time to time the practice of drowning girls comes to light. Of course, families of standing do not necessarily soil themselves with the dirty custom, but the ignorant rustics are often found to regard it as a fixed habit; they make no mystery of it, and thus we find infants cast

away on the ground, etc., etc." The coast prefecture above mentioned adjoins that to which the city of Chu-ki belongs, as to which latter place we have as testimony the language of a proclamation at least four hundred years old. I myself travelled on foot hundreds of miles through this region in 1883; but I found that, except on the coast, so much damage had been done by recent rebellions that large tracts were almost deserted. The official returns make out that the population is now only one-third of what it used to be, so that, naturally, the desire to get rid of superfluous children would become weaker. In fact, there is specific testimony upon this point, for ten years ago the Right Rev. Bishop Moule wrote:—"The district of Chu-ki was, up to the civil war of the Taiping insurrection, remarkable for the prevalence of infanticide. . . . It is now comparatively unknown."

But there are other provinces, besides those mentioned long ago, in which the custom has grown up in modern times. In 1880 I drew attention, in the Hongkong press, to a proclamation issued by the district magistrate of Canton, calling upon the villages to establish "six-cash clubs" for the prevention of infanticide. It is unnecessary here to enter into the details; but the idea seems to have been to create a sort of poverty insurance fund, "in order to afford twenty months' allowances to poor women unable to keep their female babies alive." This action was taken in consequence of direct commands from the Emperor, before whose notice a censor had brought the fact that the drowning of girls was increasing. This view is supported by the testimony of a correspondent of the *China Review*, who wrote in 1873 to say that Mr. George Hughes was mistaken in supposing that female infanticide was only practised in Canton province by emigrants from Fuh Kien and Kiang Si. The correspondent said, speaking of the original inhabitants:—"The fact of the crime in question being generally and largely practised has become a mournful conviction with me during the last six or seven years whilst travelling and temporarily residing in several of their districts." But, although poverty was usually given as the excuse, he found that the peasant women grudged the time necessary to tend children, and wanted to get back to work, whilst the rich "say they do not want any more girls."

The last region concerning which I have original evidence is Huh Pêh, and it is in the shape of a proclamation by the treasurer of that province. The official gives the usual three reasons, but endeavours to convince the people that "Heaven will not be forced into sending boys, and the more you kill your girls the more they will be born again." It is to be noted that the province over which the treasurer's jurisdiction extended covers the area between Hankow and the lakes, where the poet, Su Tung-po, made the first recorded discovery of the existence of infanticide.

Thus, we see that there is a practically continuous chain of evidence, from the eleventh century down to this day, establishing in the most unmistakable way the fact that the custom of drowning female infants has been specially noticeable along the southern coasts and around the great lakes of China. Yet there have always been a number of persons ready to deny the fact. For instance, Mr. H. A. Giles, then Vice-Consul at Shanghai, wrote in 1884 :—"I am unable to believe that infanticide prevails to any great extent in China. . . . I believe it to be no more practised than in England, France, the United States, and elsewhere." Mr. Giles was then president of the local branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, and although he thus had the courage of his own opinion, yet he was quite ready, in his presidential capacity, to compare it with the experiences of others. Accordingly, all the more prominent Europeans and Americans in China who were likely to have had the opportunity to form independent opinions were invited to send them in to him. These opinions were collectively placed before the society in May, 1885, and a discussion followed.

It appeared from a comparison of experiences that a great many persons who have expressed strong opinions upon infanticide have not been careful to distinguish between the deliberate killing of girls, usually by drowning, and concealment of birth, or child-exposure, which latter object is usually effected by leaving the child in the fork of a tree, wrapped up in a mat by the roadside, etc. Some testifiers accused the Buddhist soul-transmigration doctrine of criminal responsibility, in consequence of the ignorant people having imbibed the notion that the soul of a dead girl may be born again as a

boy. Chinese family custom does not escape ; it was argued by others that, as a girl ceases to belong to her own family when married, the custom which passes her over to another clan is responsible for the feeling of repulsion which each tribe harbours against useless creatures who can never profit their own kind. Even Confucianism and ancestral worship come in for a share of blame ; for, as the girl can never perform the ancestral sacrifices, she is incapable of repaying the benefits she has received in this world by performing spiritual services to her deceased ancestors in the next. There was a general consensus of opinion that the crime was as rare in the north as it was common in the south ; it is so rare at Peking, that one of the oldest residents, Dr. Dudgeon, maintained that it was no commoner there than in England : but Professor Martin, who was, and still is, a man of ripe Peking experience, explained that the kindred crime of nipping unconscious life in the bud took the place in the metropolitan region of infanticide properly so-called. Witnesses from South Fuh Kien attested to the fact that a sort of polyandry prevailed there, in consequence of the great scarcity of women. This testimony confirms what has already been stated concerning the Zaitun tract of country. The Ven. Archdeacon Moule gave an account of his experiences in North Chêh Kiang, including the parts around Ningpo. He had travelled about during the years immediately succeeding the rebellion, and he came to the conclusion that the practice was neither widely spread nor normal, besides being on the decrease. During the distress and misery which accompanied the Taiping rebellion, the crime was of frequent occurrence, and the archdeacon himself knew several families with the guilt upon their heads. As for the southern parts of Chêh Kiang, Dr. Macgowan estimated that 40 per cent. of the female infants were destroyed in the district nearest the Fuh Kien frontier. Mr. Cooper, Consul for Ningpo, said that his wife's own nurse, who was an admirable servant, admitted having killed three of her infants by stuffing their mouths and nostrils with cotton tinder, besides having assisted to kill other women's girls. From Mr. Cooper's account, this nurse would seem to have been a Swatow woman ; but, both near Ningpo and Swatow, he was told that the excess of males over females



was due to the prevalence of infanticide. Forty women examined by Miss Fielde in the neighbourhood of Swatow admitted having killed seventy-eight daughters. Swatow, again, is in the region of Canton province, bordering on Fuh Kien : in fact, it is from that last-named province, and the neighbouring parts of Kiang Si, Kwang Tung, and Chêh Kiang bordering on it, that, with the single exception of Hu Pêh, all the evidence of infanticide proceeds. It is also from Fuh Kien *par excellence* that most of the emigration proceeds ; indeed, it is from that province and the neighbouring parts of Canton that nearly all emigration to foreign countries takes place : the exception is the Shan Tung emigration to Russia and Corea. It is also the province of Fuh Kien which has the worst reputation for certain aggravated forms of immorality. Hence it seems safe to conclude that the deeply-rooted practice of infanticide in that part of the empire works many attendant evils. On the other hand, we must not forget that Fuh Kien was always the chief maritime province, from which emigration also proceeded many centuries ago. It is always possible, moreover, that the emigration of males and the influx of Arabs, Hindus, and other traders may have been an element in favouring the development of female infanticide.

The testimony of the missionaries acquainted with North China is in favour of comparative rarity, not only in Peking and the Chih Li province, but also in the neighbouring ones of Shan Tung and Manchuria. I have never heard of infanticide amongst the Mongols ; nor, in the early histories of Corea, the Manchus, Turks, Japanese, or Tibetans, have I ever come across the faintest allusion to such a practice. Tartar blood runs freely in the veins of the North China populations, the whole of that region having repeatedly remained for long periods under Tartar rule, besides having been frequently overrun by various northern races. Perhaps it is reasonable to conclude that the influence of nations not given to the practice has had an effect upon the Chinese living alongside of them, and has stayed any budding tendency to female infanticide. In the western province of Sz Ch'wan, I myself made inquiry, but I found that the practice was rare. Yet, during my wanderings there, I noticed one proclamation against it. This was in 1881, and was probably in consequence



of the circular orders issued by the Emperor about that time, to which allusion has already been made. The reason infanticide is so rare in Sz Ch'wan is that there is a large export of women to Shen Si, which last province has recently been devastated by Mussulman rebellions. There was also a heavy export to Shanghai, and I found that the native customs officials, with the connivance of the police, used to charge an export *likin* of about 2s. a female. The gentlemen whose testimony was laid before the Asiatic Society confirm this view of things for other parts of China. Thus, Dr. Macgowan testifies to a brisk export of girls from Wênchow to Shanghai, prices having risen from 10 dols. and 20 dols. to 60 dols. and even 200 dols. per head; consequently infanticide in the adjoining country had become less frequent.

The evidence laid before the Shanghai society brought out the undoubted fact that of late years infanticide has tended to include boys; also, that the family council often had as much to say in the matter as the parents of the child; again, that the midwives were usually either themselves the guilty parties, or they were the prompters of, or connivers at guilt. The evidence also brought in An Huei province, which forms the remainder of the old Kiang Nan. The total net result, then, which we now submit to our readers, is this: Infanticide (female) has prevailed for 800 years in Fuh Kien, and the parts of other provinces bordering on Fuh Kien. No serious steps have ever been taken to stop it, nor have the laws made to that end ever been put into real force.

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### CHAPTER III

#### CHINESE SLAVERY

ACCORDING to the oldest Chinese definitions, slaves were originally either criminals or captives; or, according to one good authority, criminals, and therefore official captives. In B.C. 202 the Emperor ordered that all persons who (during

the great revolution) had sold themselves into slavery to escape starvation should be emancipated. A sort of free serfage, with liberty to emigrate from the Imperial to the vassal estates, and with liability to serve the public by a fixed amount of labour in each case, seems to have been in vogue between 3000 and 2000 years back. It was not until the rise of the true Imperial system 2000 years ago that free men drifted into a state of serfdom; and during the great wars with the Hiung-nu (*i.e.* the ancestors of the Turks), when the treasuries were depleted, inducements were offered to the people to contribute slaves, instead of money, for frontier defence. In B.C. 160 all Government slaves were emancipated; but in B.C. 144 mention is still made of 30,000 slaves in charge of the 300,000 horses in the breeding-grounds of the north. On the other hand, in B.C. 140 the families of captives taken during a recent rebellion were sent back to their homes when peace was declared. It appears from casual statements in history that private families at this time owned hundreds, and even thousands, of slaves, often employed in crafts and industries. In B.C. 13 a decree inveighed against luxury and excessive showiness in the numbers of slaves employed by the rich. About A.D. 1 the Emperor had to limit the number of slaves which a great dignitary might own. A few years later, the founder of the Second Han dynasty, by special edict, freed many private slaves, and declared that every girl sold as a wife should be free. He totally prohibited the killing or branding of slaves, who were, however, still unable to employ the produce of their labour to purchase freedom withal. Male and female slaves made under new laws during the Wang Mang usurpation were emancipated. Owners who branded slaves were punished, and, besides, such branded slaves were emancipated. Slaves taken captive during the south-western wars of 30-38 were sent back to their homes.

The Chinese Wei dynasty which succeeded the Second Han prohibited the sale in the market of Government slaves who were worn out, or over seventy years of age: they were emancipated, and, if indigent, fed by the magistrates. In 303 the Tsing dynasty which succeeded the Wei on one occasion impounded the slaves of princes and dukes in order to secure

corn-grinders for the troops. In 459 the Sung dynasty gave all the girls captured at a besieged town to the soldiers. The Tartar dynasties of the fourth to sixth centuries, which ruled in the north whilst the Sung and other houses reigned at Nanking, had all their agricultural work done by slaves; eight were allowed to each married pair, and four to each bachelor; ten oxen counted as eight slaves, and lands were divided into ox-lands and slave-lands. But even these Tartars possessed bowels of compassion, for in 485 a decree ordered that "free beggars," as other persons who from hunger had sold themselves into slavery, should be sent home; and, even if the slave women married in their masters' families, they should be free to elect to go home. In 493 the same Tartar Wei dynasty prohibited marriages between serfs and free men; but serfs possessing education were allowed to enter the public service. In 494, after a war with the southern dynasty of Chinese Ts'i, all captives taken in battle were sent back to the south. In 497 criminals sentenced to banishment were allowed to join the ranks as "forlorn hopes," in order by a display of bravery to fairly recover their freedom. In 545 the Tartar Ts'i dynasty provided their male captives of war with "honest widows."

In 518 the southern dynasty of Liang emancipated all male slaves over sixty and all females over fifty. In 543, during palace commotions, thirty rich families were ordered to supply one slave each to the Emperor. In 549 a number of northern captives, with their wives and families, were again sent back. In 555, during a period of anarchy, many thousands of honest peasants were driven in to one of the contested capitals as slaves. In 565 the Ch'ên dynasty, which succeeded the Liang house in the south, sent back to their homes all the northern captives taken in war.

Thus it will be seen that during the contests between Chinese and Tartar, both sides were merciful. Towards the end of the eighth century, when a Chinese dynasty once more occupied the sole throne, the Emperor, whose policy it was to discourage enormous private estates, put a stop to the annual supplies of male and female slaves sent as tribute or tax from the provinces; his motive was also sympathy with human suffering. Notwithstanding this, the slave market

remained open to private individuals, and free men were bought and sold as slaves all over the Empire, and, indeed, had been so without break for at least a thousand years. Then came another period of Tartar domination. During the Ming dynasty, which succeeded the Mongols, the custom of accumulating large numbers of slaves in private families once more received an impetus, and it became the fashion for rich persons to vie with each other in showing off their smart human cattle. The Manchu dynasty imposed limitations upon this, and subjected the purchase of men and women to the control of the law. The bondage and serfage which already formed part of the private Manchu military system developed, in unison with the Chinese slave trade, into a kind of patron and client relationship, and the early Emperors found it necessary to issue frequent edicts upon the subject. Manchu clients showed a tendency to ignore the Chinese territorial rulers, and to take refuge under the arm of their patrons. Chinese slaves, and even rich merchants and free men, observing the advantages of having a private protector, were often only too willing to give or sell themselves into a condition of serfage or slavery; so that for some time clients, serfs, and slaves seem to have been more or less confused together. But the Manchu codified statutes have always made a distinction between master and slave in the eyes of the law, for offences by persons in bondage are visited by a penalty one degree heavier than if committed by a free person. The law does not prevent all parents from selling their children, but at the same time it distinguishes between selling a free man, a freed man, and a person born in slavery; it also takes cognizance of the purpose for which the person is sold, and extends a certain amount of protection by providing a punishment for masters who beat their slaves to death. In the year 1731 the Emperor Yung-chêng explicitly recognized, without, however, approving, the right of poor persons to sell their offspring. The Emperor K'ien-lung was even more explicit in 1788. In 1726 it was found that Chinese slaves were beginning to grow too impudent, and the Emperor K'ang-hi expressly ordained that their owners should be placed on the same footing with regard to compulsory powers as that existing under the Manchu system between lord and bondsman. The



inquiry instituted at this time led to the discovery of various obscure serfage customs in different parts of the Empire, and steps were taken to assimilate these customary serfs to free Chinese.

To go back once more to ancient times, and trace the origin and progress of slavery in China :—it seems that private persons were served by personal contract, and were at first not allowed to possess slaves. The offspring of public slaves recruited the lictor or police class, whilst the females washed clothes and hulled the rice ; even the *servi poenae*, or public slaves, might not be either persons over seventy years of age, or children. This was the general rule, and evidently refers to the Wei decree of 246 cited above ; but the vassal or feudal States all had their local laws and customs, under which the dependent classes may have suffered in a way unrecorded by Imperial history. The old feudal system was broken up 2100 years ago by the celebrated “First Emperor,” whose house, like the family of nominal kings or emperors he broke up, also came from the semi-barbarous western frontiers. Even under the rule of this dynasty, the sons of convict slaves were declared free. It was in B.C. 204, after the devastating wars which succeeded the death of this great innovator and his feeble successor, that the founder of the true Chinese Imperial system, as it still exists (with modifications in detail), explicitly allowed destitute persons to relieve their misery by selling their children. As we have seen, in B.C. 202 a change was made. But, as a rule, the stock of slaves was recruited from the criminal classes, or from prisoners of war. For instance, in B.C. 154, seven provinces or feudal sub-kingdoms revolted, and their whole populations were condemned to be slaves of the State ; though the next Emperor, as already mentioned, pardoned them in B.C. 140, and deprived private owners of the right of killing their slaves without good reason. Fifty years later an Emperor, in setting free more slaves, expressly declared that the magistrates had no power to interfere with private slaves. The Imperial farms and parks employed as many as a quarter of a million of slaves, and these State slaves are mentioned again in the first and sixth centuries of our era. During the first century, revolted provinces whose populations had again



incurred the penalty of slavery were enfranchised in order that they might till waste lands.

From the second to the fourth centuries of our era it became a custom for cultivators to place themselves under powerful personages for the sake of protection, like the *adscriptitii* of Rome ; the lord was assessed for them by the poll. The dynasty which reigned during the seventh, eighth, and ninth centuries freed large numbers of Government slaves, and distributed them over the western and central provinces ; but private families at that time still continued to own considerable bodies of cultivators. A slave who should accuse his master of a crime was at once executed, and his evidence was ignored. Emancipation by Imperial authority against the will of the private owner ceases to be heard of. But masters could, by mere note of hand, set free their slaves, who, in any case, received liberty on attaining the age of seventy. In 821 and 823 there were decrees forbidding the purchase of Corean slaves captured by pirates, and those already in China were sent back. From the tenth century until the close of the Sung dynasty and the accession of the Mongols, private owners' rights remained much as before, but Government slavery seems to have drifted back to its original condition ; we find transported criminals, but no mention of Government slaves or farm serfs. It was the policy of the Sung dynasty to reduce the number of slaves in the households of the rich. The personal property of Mongols is occasionally stated to have included captives spared in war, and the Mongol Emperors in several instances enfranchised literary men. Drove of prisoners of war were sent to the capital of the purely Chinese dynasty which succeeded the Mongols, and their offspring became slaves in perpetuity. By degrees these slaves passed from hand to hand by deed of sale, upon which a tax was levied ; and, in order to put a stop to the practice of kidnapping, a law was passed making it illegal to treat free men as prisoners of war. From ancient times till now there have also been personal slaves or serfs given away as part of the dowry of princesses. Maidens of this class are mentioned in the oldest Chinese books, and onwards, throughout the wars, treaties, and intermarriages with foreign ruling families, right up to the time of the

Manchu conquest. Slaves were obliged, however, to intermarry amongst themselves, and, though the males of free families were allowed to marry female slaves if they really wished, as a general rule the Ming statutes forbade such unions, and certainly those between free females and male slaves. A slave's *peculium* or private property belonged to his master in law, but public opinion was against arbitrary confiscation, and rich slaves were usually able to make independent use of their wealth by purchasing emancipation from their owners.

Under the Manchus the old idea of Government slavery has almost disappeared, at least in name ; but in effect the punishment of banishment, when coupled with the obligation to work under Government officers, is practically the same. In the case of the traitors, the families are reduced to slavery and "given to the Manchu soldiery." The eunuch class is partly recruited from the young sons of arch-traitors, as, for instance, the sons of Yakub Beg. During the early wars of the reigning dynasty, frequent mention is made of captives of war. At first each Manchu soldier seems to have had his share of human plunder ; but as the new family gradually settled down upon the throne, the subject race regained its self-respect, and wriggled out of its inferior position. Now such prisoners of war are rarely met with except on the frontiers of Tibet. Criminals are sometimes sent to "Mussulmans on the frontier capable of keeping a hold on them." As already stated, many Chinese give up their liberty for protection ; but already, in 1645, we find the first Emperor ordaining that "Chinese were not to be terrorized into becoming slaves ;" and, as to criminals, a tendency showed itself to free the innocent families from taint, except in cases of treason and violent robbery. In 1652 the profession of "slave-trader" was made illegal, as it was found that, not only free Chinese, but even Manchu women were being kidnapped. And so on until at last it was necessary to put a stop altogether to the Chinese practice of becoming a client attached as a kind of serf to the Manchu banners. In 1651 regulations were made providing that prisoners of war owned by the Manchus should be allowed to visit their friends occasionally, and, generally, a tendency was shown to soften

the lot of both Manchu and Chinese bondsmen. In 1727 the *to-min* or "idle people" of Chêh Kiang province (a Ningpo name still existing), the *yoh-hu* or "music people" of Shan Si province, the *si-min* or "small people" of Kiang Su province, and the *tan-ka* or "egg-people" of Canton (to this day the boat population there), were all freed from their social disabilities, and allowed to count as free men. So far as my own observations go, after residing for a quarter of a century in half the provinces of China, north, south, east, and west, I should be inclined to describe slavery in China as totally invisible to the naked eye ; personal liberty is absolute where feebleness or ignorance do not expose the subject to the rapacity of mandarins, relatives, or speculators. Even savages and foreigners are welcomed as equals, so long as they conform unreservedly to Chinese custom. On the other hand, the old-fashioned social disabilities of policemen, barbers, and play-actors still exist in the eyes of the law, though any idea of caste is totally absent therefrom, and "unofficially" these individuals are as good as any other free men.

Having now taken a cursory view of Chinese slavery from its historical aspect, let us see what it is in practice. Though the penal code forbids and annuls the sale into slavery of free persons, even by a husband, father, or grandfather, yet the number of free persons who are sold or sell themselves to escape starvation and misery is considerable. It is nominally a punishable offence to keep a free man or lost child as a slave ; also for parents to sell their children without the consent of the latter, or to drown their girls ; but in practice the law is in both cases ignored, and scarcely ever enforced ; *à fortiori* the minor offence of selling children, even with their consent. Indeed, sales of girls for secondary wives is of daily occurrence, and, as we have seen, the Emperors Yung-chêng and K'ien-lung explicitly recognized the right of parents to sell children in times of famine, whilst the missionaries unanimously bear witness to the fact that the public sale of children in the streets—for instance, of Tientsin—was frequently witnessed during recent times of dearth. But slave markets and public sales are unknown in a general way. Occasionally old parents sell their children in order to purchase coffins for themselves. Only a few years ago a governor and a censor

were both punished by the Emperor, not for purchasing concubines, but for "purchasing them in the wrong province," *i.e.* where they were employed officially. The slave is the absolute property of, and may be sold at any age by, the owner. The deed of sale much resembles that used in transferring houses. It begins with a declaration of reasons; states (in the case of parents) that the family council does not object, and that no member desires to adopt the subject; engages a middleman and witnesses; covenants for title (*i.e.* that the man or woman is not already in pawn); and undertakes not to make trouble or to repent in future. Occasionally there is a stipulation that no inquiry will be made if the master kills the slave in the course of merited chastisement. This is, of course, in order to avoid running against the law prohibiting the deliberate maiming or slaying of slaves; and it must be remembered, in explanation of the fact that some laws are in practice ignored, that no crime except treason is, as a rule, taken notice of by Chinese authority unless the families interested apply by petition. Thus, the slave's family may, unless they sign their rights away, lodge a complaint; but a slave cannot sue or accuse his master—indeed, it is punishable to do so.

Anciently, a slave always took his master's family name, and, to a certain extent, this rule still prevails; but, at least in some parts of China, modern slaves continue to use their own. If the master does not object, the slave may marry, whether it be a female slave of the same master, or a slave purchased by the master for the purpose. Custom varies as to whether the master or the slave's father manages the marriage; it depends in practice on who provides the money. It is punishable in the master or others to obtain a free wife for the slave by representing him as free; and the slave is punishable if he marries a free girl: moreover, the marriage is void. The slave wife marries on foot, and receives no musical escort, sedan-chair, or other *confarreatio* honours. Slaves are subject to the same prohibitions as free men as to incestuous marriages, and they have the same ancestral duties to perform. A female slave who has a child by her master becomes *ipso facto* a wife of the subordinate class; in fact, most secondary wives in China are purchased, and therefore,



unless originally purchased in order to be a wife, they are slaves. Even Europeans purchase and occasionally formally marry them, but of course at once grant them their liberty, as no European Government recognizes any right in slave property. In China it is not at all unusual for officials to buy a secondary wife of immoral antecedents, the first wife usually remaining at home ; for a civil official cannot serve in his own province. The husband is responsible for such a woman's debts, and if he cannot or will not pay, the law will decree that he must sell her in satisfaction. In China it is always possible for an erring woman to regain her position as an "honest female."

The slave's wife cannot be separated from him, whether he remains with or is sold by his master ; but the offspring, if fed at the owner's expense, belong to the master and his heirs, and may be sold or separated without consulting the slave parents. Play-actors and unfortunates are recruited from this class, as free persons may not be sold to such uses ; this last ordinance dates from Kublai Khan, and seems to have continued through the Ming dynasty. The slave father may sell his own offspring if he feeds them. If the master or any free man misconducts himself with the slave's wife, he is punishable in a less degree than if both parties were free, or both slaves ; on the other hand, a slave misconducting himself with a free woman is (apart from any punishment, even death, the master may choose to inflict, which, if in anger, is usually not visited with punishment) one degree more liable than a free man before the law ; but the law itself visits with death or banishment, according to relationship, offences with the master's female relatives. Even a free man may be killed with impunity if taken in the act of adultery, and if the woman is killed at the same time ; the idea being that, unless both are killed, there is suspicion of collusion. The law does not protect unmarried female slaves by placing any limit of age upon a master's inclinations, but the girl's consent is required.

As a rule, full-grown male slaves are rare, and in any case only owned by Government officers, nobles, or opulent land-owners, who buy them when boys. Male slaves are both younger and fewer now than they ever were before in China,



nor is there any external mark by which they may be distinguished. There is no such a thing in China as driving slaves as they used to do in America; the work is usually light field or household labour, personal attendance, or assistance in performing the master's ancestral duties. Fuh Kien merchants, engaged in the Tonquin or Siamese trade, buy boys to breed up as "sons," as they do not like to send their own children away so far. I have met many such in Burma. Most slaves are females, and, if sold as secondary wives, or if, being handmaids, they give birth to children belonging to their master, are practically free so long as they behave themselves decently. An inferior wife-mother, though dependent on the first wife, is entitled to good treatment so long as she remains a widow; and she can always defend the rights of her own children, though such children in law belong to the first wife. In any case she ranks, from the first, above a mere handmaid or female slave, though she is married without much more formality; the husband can only dismiss her for certain specified reasons, though in practice inferior wives are often bandied about and sold. It is only the rich who can afford inferior wives; among the poor the only wife is, or may be, bandied about in the same way, especially if she consents. The secondary wife is liable to one degree less penalty than the first wife for a number of classified offences; but both of them are completely under the husband's thumb; may not complain of castigation unless it is very serious; may not separate from him unless he consents; and the secondary wife is also often a mere slave of the first. In Canton, at least, even a slave girl who remains unmarried with her widowed mistress until the latter's death inherits part of the property; if she marries, the mistress must provide the trousseau. So far as my observations and inquiries go, their "Mormon" system works peaceably in the majority of cases.

Kidnapping is very common in China, especially in times of trouble; or girls are beguiled from their parents by dealers on the pretext of finding work or husbands for them. The worst fate often awaits these children, but many such are comfortably brought up and educated at Macao by "mothers," who either sell them or let their services out on hire. These girls have much liberty, and frequently develop high friendship

for their fellows, and even for their "mother," who allows them to purchase liberty by instalments on easy terms. A very large number of them are united in marriage, sometimes of a formal, oftener of a less formal type, to Europeans and Americans, especially those of the seafaring classes. About twelve years ago the Governor of Formosa reported that seventy per cent. of the Chinese girls there were bought from and sold to each other by the mothers, each one of whom was thus technically free of the crime of devoting her own offspring to an immoral life. The Viceroy of Sz Ch'wan also officially reported to the Emperor a few years ago the wholesale export of girls from his province to Shanghai and the coast. His statements were confirmed by the Governor of Hu Pêh province.

I have often cross-examined Chinese slaves of both sexes; the following typical case will illustrate the quality of modern Chinese slavery:—

"I belonged to an old and well-to-do family of cultivators on the coast. During the rebellion of 1854 the Taipings came, and we all took to the mountains. My mother was so exhausted that she died, and I was sold by some one to a man for two dollars; he took me somewhere in a boat, and another man sold me to 'mother' for twenty dollars. I lived twelve years at Macao, and my 'mother' owned two junks; her son wanted to have me as a secondary wife, but I preferred to live in a foreign house. I have never heard anything since of my family or native village, and have long since forgotten the local dialect. The man who took me on hire failed some months afterwards, but my 'mother' allowed me to select a second husband for myself; he was also on the hire system, but I managed to save enough to buy my 'mother' out for three hundred dollars, and now I have had an offer of real marriage from an English engineer."

In the province of Kiang Si the old custom of wife-pawning still exists, although a thousand years have elapsed since it was prohibited by law. A few years ago a case was recorded where a wife was pawned for the winter for thirty dollars, then redeemed, then sold for a hundred dollars, half payable down and half after the hundredth day; the woman, however, hanged herself after her impecunious husband had secured the first fifty dollars.

In spite of the apparently helpless inferiority of the theoretical female position in China, in practice they are as

free in the majority of cases as men, *i.e.* within the precincts of four walls; indeed, the influence of women, especially of mothers, is very great, and they often "rule the roast." The average Chinese man is not jealous, nor is he tyrannical; it is ancient custom which confines woman to seclusion, or, if she cannot afford seclusion, to reserve. Cases of gross cruelty are rare.

To be sold as a son or a wife is not at all the same thing as to be sold as a slave, although the immediate disabilities are much the same. The one rather resembles the *mancipium*, the other the *servitus* of the Romans. The difference is that the blood is not corrupted, and the offspring are not disqualified from entering the public civil service. An adult son may be sold in adoption without his consent, but if he already holds an official position, it would be difficult to force him to submit against his will; in this case the wife goes with the son, but the children of the adopted son remain with the grandfather. An adult, or, in fact, a youth of any age, thus sold in adoption cannot be re-sold like a slave, and money is only nominally exchanged in order to outwardly comply with the legal form of *coemptio*. As usually only childless persons adopt, the adopted has an excellent chance of inheriting the whole estate; in any case he takes share and share with the real son. Sometimes if sons turn up, he "reverts to his family" and takes back his own name. In short, sale for adoptive purposes has nothing to do with slavery, except that a son and a slave are, *vis à vis* of the *patria potestas*, much the same thing.

Torturing, overworking, beating, branding, and starving slaves are acts not unseldom heard of; but they are exceptional, and not more frequent than maltreating children, hired servants, or daughters-in-law; they form no part of the regular stock-in-trade of slave life, and, when they occur, can easily be hushed up with money payments, money for a coffin, pork feasts of apology, etc.; that is, always providing public feeling or influential family or clan hostility is not roused. All Chinese dread the howls of old women, and, unless a cruel master compensates a slave for cruelty, the slave's mother will probably make such a noise that life will become intolerable. Over and over again the British

Consulate at Shanghai has found old women more formidable to deal with than the mandarins, in cases where compensation is refused and expected ; for instance, when a steamer runs down a junk, when an only son is condemned to death, when disputed land is adjudged to a foreigner. In fact, the *patria potestas* in China may be described as "tyranny, tempered by suicide and old women." Besides, the law will not, as a rule, render any assistance to a master whose slaves run away. Moreover, there are certain spiritual penalties registered in Heaven by law against masters who ill-treat, starve, neglect in sickness, or decline to provide wives for male slaves ; even for obstinately refusing to sell them their liberty. A master is expected either to find husbands for female slaves, or to take them himself as secondary wives. A master may often escape the consequences of killing a slave by hastening at once to inform a magistrate of the reasons ; but in such cases the family of the slave receive their liberty: the penalties also vary according to whether the slave belongs to the accused, to a relative, or to a stranger. The best proof that Chinese slavery is of a mild character is that, during their whole history, there has never been a revolt of slaves, and in the Chinese mind there is always a lurking fatalistic feeling that the wheel of fortune may make slaves of the richest individual, coupled also with a strong Buddhist antipathy to taking human life, or creating physical misery in living creatures of any kind. There may be traces of race hatred, but there is absolutely no class hatred in China ; even though slaves, barbers, policemen, and actors are historically and traditionally "foul" for three generations, recent "special judgments" or *obiter dicta* of the Emperors have so whittled the strict law away that it is doubtful if any cases other than gross cases, or cases supported by strong influence, would be officially noticed. In any event, the disability is only that these unclean persons may not compete at the examinations.

The slave is commonly made to impress the lines of his hand in pigment upon the deed which transfers his person. There can then be no possible doubt of his identity, as no two skin-marks are alike. The loss of this document deprives the owner of his claim upon the slave ; but sellers as well as



purchasers usually keep copies. Manumission is effected either by delivering the deed of sale to the slave, or by making out a new one declaring the manumission; his children become free at the same moment. Freed men or ex-slaves are, in practice, expected to show deference to their former master, but the law does not seem to insist upon it; still less does the Chinese law give to the freeing master any property rights or expectations, as in Roman cases. But there appears to be a distinction between slaves who have been given and those who have purchased their freedom. In the latter case an ex-slave who strikes or kills his ex-master is on the footing of a free man; in the former of a slave: but the law and custom are a little involved as to this point. Moreover, an ex-master is not punished for falsely accusing an ex-slave, whereas he is punished for falsely accusing his first wife, as the latter also is for falsely accusing the inferior wives. A slave is bound to follow his owner to the grave and mourn for him, and this liability would probably attach to ex-slaves to whom freedom had been given gratuitously.

A Chinese master is not ashamed to eat with his male slave. I have seen mandarins lying down in the same travelling boat and smoking opium with their servants—possibly their slaves; and it must be borne in mind that menial service in China is viewed in much the same light as slavery. Viceroys and governors habitually allow their slaves to light their pipes and puff them into a blaze. Though the Chinese are barbarously cruel under the influence of fear and excitement, they are mild and gentle in daily life, and rarely inclined to use force. A Legree is an unknown phenomenon in China; what spiteful cruelty there is ordinarily comes from women, usually jealous ones.





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GENERAL MAP OF 18 PROVINCES AND BORDERING TERRITORY, TO ILLUSTRATE TRADE CENTRES.  
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